

# The Clearing House

*A journal for modern junior and senior high schools*

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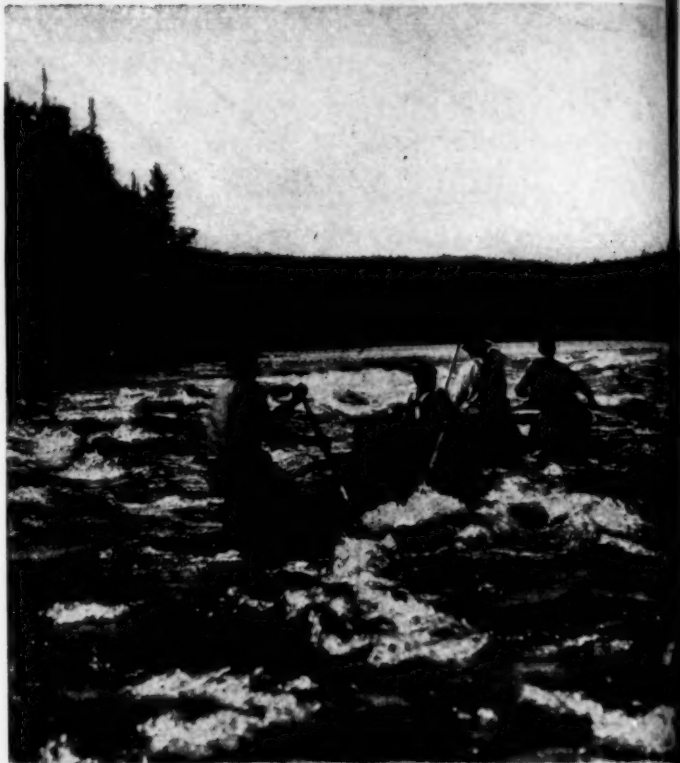
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## THE CLEARING HOUSE

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# REPORTS *to the* HOME

*An analysis of the best current practices  
drawn from the improvements of many schools*

By

SHAILER A. PETERSON

IT is the purpose of this article to show the changes which are taking place in our reporting systems, and to present some evidence as to which is the most desirable procedure. There have evolved a great many changes in the various grading and scoring schemes. Indeed, it is hard to tell whether progress in either grading or reporting is the result of the other or whether they have gone hand in hand.

Previous to 1929, relatively little attention was given to pupil reports. They usually contained just room enough for six periodic reports on the basic subjects, attendance, and deportment. Then in 1929, they began getting longer and somewhat more complicated.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *After discussing many of the interesting developments in modern reporting systems that have been worked out by high schools in various parts of the country, the author lists at the end of this article eleven ideas "that seem to him to answer the needs of a good reporting and grading system". Mr. Peterson is instructor in the College of Education, and head of the Science Department of the High School, of the University of Minnesota, at Minneapolis.*

There are several reasons, rather than one, for having some type of report to the parents.

In the first place, the report card is a method of informing the parents of the child's school life, that they may do their part to allow the educational program really to educate. The time that the pupil spends in school is relatively short when you consider his play, his home, and his neighbor friends. It is easy for one to understand how quickly work done in the school could be nullified elsewhere. Therefore it is very important that the school by some medium make contact with the home in an effort to acquaint the parents with the various situations as they arise, as well as serving merely as a progress report. Heck<sup>1</sup> rather ably expresses this objective when he says, "The more nearly the child's school life, home life, and play life coalesce—all become one with living—the more nearly will the child be treading the path to a true education."

Ordinarily, one will find the parents as interested in their child's activities in the school as any place. Often, they are even more interested, and are anxious that the

<sup>1</sup> Heck, A. O., *Administration of Pupil Personnel*, Chaps. XI and XIV. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1929.

home cooperate in every way with the functions of the school. When someone reports that the parents are not vitally interested, the reason is usually that they do not quite understand the situation. When the nature of the reports has been explained, and any other obscured fact which might give reason for misunderstanding, then the parents realize what an integral part the school is in the child's life.

It is certainly true that when there is any lack of cooperation between parent and school, it is usually because of lack of complete understanding. Some school systems have seemingly taken every precaution to see that everything is explained.

In Aberdeen, South Dakota,<sup>2</sup> they have substituted the conference method for any type of written report, inviting the parents to visit the school four times a year for an interview. Anderson<sup>3</sup> recommends that an evening be devoted to a dramatization of the various items on the report cards, for the benefit of the parents.

It is also interesting to note that, according to Alltucker,<sup>4</sup> some of the schools list on the card ways in which the parent may help the teacher. This aids in a better understanding, as well as showing exactly what is expected in the line of cooperation. Heck<sup>5</sup> says that in some schools the report may even convey such advice as telling the parent not to do the pupil's work.

The length of time between reports generally used to be a month. In fact, many of the medium-sized cities continue to use that period of time even now, but on the whole there is a tendency for a longer period.

Many schools are now increasing the informality of reports by occasional calls on the telephone whenever they seem advisa-

ble. Others have what are called "Special Notice Sheets", which may be printed forms or informally written notes sent to inform the parents at irregular intervals.

For the sake of records or statistical data, one can readily see certain advantages in having a regular reporting time. It might also be highly desirable to have these often, thereby allowing a greater amount of data to accumulate. But, the mere fact that the trend is toward longer periods and fewer reports is indicative of the fact that there must be more interest in the subjective type of report revealing general progress, than in the regular, detailed, numerical averages.

It is also true, even from a statistician's point of view, that one can better pass judgment on a situation or an individual from data representative of a large space of time, rather than any small, isolated unit of that whole. Parents may become misled or confused by a large mass of data and statistical information, whereas a simple cumulative appraisal is much more understandable to them, and obviously easier for the teacher to estimate.

The criticism that may be made of this statement is that for dullards and lazy individuals, warnings and estimates of progress may be desired more often. That is perfectly true, and it is partly for that reason that "Special Notice Sheets" have come into use.

Administrators have always been concerned about the fact that many of the parents never see the report cards, and their signatures are forged. Some principals make it a point to keep the parents' signatures on file at the school, and from time to time compare them with those on the reports. The actual comparison is probably of less value than the fact that the pupils themselves know that such comparisons are likely to be made.

Another method is to mail the report card. This is naturally more expensive and in some cases not much is accomplished. The pupil may waylay the mail before it

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, Homer W., "Experiments in Reporting Pupil Progress", *Elementary School Journal* 36:409-13, Feb. 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, A. H., "Report Card in Character Education," *National Education Association Journal*, 19:307-8, Dec. 1930.

<sup>4</sup> Alltucker, N. M., "Keeping Parents Informal", *National Education Association Journal*, 14:67-68, Feb. 1925.

<sup>5</sup> Heck, *op. cit.*, page 2.

reaches the breakfast table. However, if the mails are to be used, one might just as well send reports to the parent's office address. Of course, it is only in the case of the poorer pupils that there is danger of forgeries, and this can be checked cheaply and easily. The secretary or principal can call the parents on the phone and offer some comment by which he can learn whether the parents are acquainted with their child's poor report, "which is no doubt in your hands by now".

There have been a great many studies of the various types of reports and report cards. When Chapman<sup>6</sup> made his exhaustive study of 842 report cards, in 1925, he found that all of them contained scholarship ratings of one kind or another.

The natural conclusion to be drawn from these data upon grades and marks is that there is a trend toward the simple. Teachers are beginning to realize that marks do not mean as much as they were once led to believe, and that there is no magic in numbers. It takes only a few cases to show conclusively how unjust marks can be.

Realizing that one cannot grade to the accuracy of one hundred divisions, pedagogues have devised a symbol system employing perhaps five or six sections. They feel that, surely, their accuracy is that great. Possibly it is, but when these pedagogues desire statistical information for the prediction of something or other, it is not long before one finds them adding together the accumulated grades and averaging them. No, not to the closest whole number but out to the second or even the third decimal figure. It seems that our grading scheme is inconsistent even in experienced hands.

Should all grades be dispensed with and the terms "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory" substituted for them? The writer thinks that this method might be very desirable, particularly in certain subjects. If one were still

interested in statistical surveys of grades, prognostic tests, and the like, the scores of the individual students could still be recorded in the offices for that purpose, but the abbreviated report would suffice for general distribution.

Would such a system cause a lowering of standards? Probably not, for the pupils who might be inclined to take it easy, would do relatively little in either case. An advocate of this scheme might assert that the type of teaching which this flexible grading might invite would possibly go further to motivate that very same lax pupil, and that he would accomplish greater things.

The trend toward informal written reports to the home is good in that it is really diagnostic. Marks or grades are of no value in themselves, whereas an opportunity to tell what improvements might be made or how they might be brought about is unquestionably of more value.

It is true that frequently the notes become stereotyped. This is to be expected when one realizes how long it has been conventional to think of a student as belonging to either the average "III" group or, perhaps, to the exceptional or "A" group, etc. It will take some time before that forced placement has left the teacher free to think in terms of diagnosis rather than mere achievement marks.

University High School at the University of Oregon has brought about some changes in its grading and reporting system, during the past year. Previously, they have used "I", "II", "III", "IV", and "V" for grading. These were not interpreted on a percentage basis. Instead a "III" was given to pupils who had, in the teacher's estimation, done about average work, and the other pupils were assigned numbers which represented approximately their places on the curve.

In relatively small classes, one cannot expect to have the distributions take the shape of a normal curve. Not wishing to bring about a transition too quickly, Professor R. U. Moore, the principal, chose to

<sup>6</sup> Chapman, H. B., and Ashbaugh, E. J., "Report Cards in American Cities and Suggestions for Pupils' Report Cards", *Education Research Bulletin of the Ohio State University*, 4:289-97, Oct. 7, 1925.

retain these marks for the first report, and supplemented them with a statement made by each of the pupil's teachers. These were to give the parents a more accurate picture of what the child was doing than the grades themselves could do. A "III", or so-called "average" mark, for one pupil may mean a lot more work for one than for another. A typical example of this report would be as follows:

Barbara Smith

Biology: IV. She finds the work rather difficult but she is very attentive and tends to apply herself well. Cooperates with the instructor as well as with the other children.

English: IV. etc. etc.

In this way, the parents of children who have little ability and low I.Q.'s receive a more accurate picture. The "IV" in itself indicates that the pupil is not up to the general class average whereas the note accompanying it indicates that the poor showing is apparently not the fault of the child, for she is applying herself diligently.

At this school, the reports come out four times during the year but not necessarily for the whole school at one time. Reporting becomes somewhat of a task if the comments are to be really constructive, and for this reason the Senior reports may come out at one time, and later the office may call for a report on the Sophomores. During the latter part of the year, the marks are kept in the office for reference but the parent receives only the written comment. Needless to say, without the numerical evaluation of the pupil's achievement in relation to the class, it is usually considered desirable to include a sentence or two in which the accomplishment itself is indicated.

At Eugene High School, Eugene, Oregon, a different type of report is being used. The school has three symbols for marking: "E" for excellent or exceptional work, "S" for satisfactory, and "U" for unsatisfactory. It attempts to grade every pupil twice in each subject, first in relation to his work in the group, and second in relation to his own capacities. This of course is partly based

upon the various maturation studies that have been reported recently.

With a large group, it is easy enough to assign a learning curve which represents the average for that whole group. If one were to know the average of the group at any one time, it would be easy to tell what fraction of the distance they had attained.

With an individual, it is decidedly different. Just because one pupil shows himself to be half way up is no sign that that is his 50 per cent achievement, for his own curve may not follow exactly the curve for the group average.

Eugene High School attempts one other thing. By arrows pointing either up or down and placed adjacent to each grade, the parent is informed whether the pupil is on an upward or downward trend in each subject. The arrows are not to be confused with the plus and minus convention.

The writer has been making use of a technique which lends itself to several different methods of grading and reporting, and at the same time appears to have some interesting possibilities.

Each pupil keeps a record of his contributions, achievements, and attendance. Forms are given to each pupil upon which data may be inscribed from day to day, but the completeness of the report is left pretty much to the individual. Just prior to the time when reports to the home are made, each pupil presents a written report to the instructor. In it he briefly describes the caliber of his own work—progress, contributions, projects, outside efforts, etc.—in as much detail as he desires. In other words, he takes inventory of himself.

It should not be hard to see some of the advantages of this plan. The pupil will watch his progress in the various examinations more closely. He will compare his efforts in the laboratory and in class demonstrations.

Few, if any, students will rely wholly upon their test score averages for either a report grade or report comment. They will want to produce and to show evidence of

producing. They won't mechanically keep record sheets before them, daily itemizing every response, question, and contribution that they make. However, if one pupil feels that one of his real contributions was made in his oral responses, he may make a record of the part he has thus taken on several occasions. This along with other things will serve as a basis for his report. This report in turn should prove very valuable to the instructor in estimating the work of the pupil as well as helping in some diagnosis.

This technique suggests an additional method. To carry the plan further—the pupil might write his report in much the same manner that the instructor would use. After receiving the signature of the instructor denoting that he had seen it, this same report might serve very well as the one for the home. The instructor could emphasize or closely endorse certain of the pupils' comments by bold underlining in the same pencil and hand that he uses in attaching his signature.

Jones<sup>7</sup> thinks that the personal conference, the individual letter type of report, and similar practices have too many disadvantages. He believes that the newer trend will be in favor of a so-called Scientific Report Card. He lists the following as aims of this technique:

1. Measurement of the pupil's performance on the basis of his individual achievement rather than with group
2. Measurement of character traits
3. Greater emphasis on diagnosis rather than ratings in terms of superiority and inferiority
4. No hair-splitting distinctions
5. Use of class and individual graphs
6. Personal messages when needed
7. Supplementing visits, letters, and telephone calls between teachers and parents
8. Use of simple and easily understood terms

Messenger and Watts<sup>8</sup> have made a careful study of the literature published on marking systems up to a few years ago, and

they have come to the following conclusions:

1. There is general dissatisfaction with any scheme of grading that encourages the comparison of pupils with each other.
2. If any grades are used, a scale of fewer grade points is favored, a three point scale being most often recommended.
3. There is a wide-spread feeling that the schools should evaluate traits as well as mere subject-matter achievement.
4. There is a clear tendency to use descriptive rather than quantitative reports.
5. Report cards are being displaced by notes or letters to parents.
6. Cards, notes, or letters are being sent at less frequent intervals and in some schools only when there is specific occasion for such communication.
7. Attempts are being made to give more detailed diagnosis of pupils' achievements.
8. Parents are being asked to cooperate in building report forms.
9. Pupils are cooperating both in devising report cards and in evaluating their own accomplishments.

In conclusion, the writer wishes to list a few ideas which seem to him to answer the needs of a good reporting and grading system:

1. Numerical grades and class means should be filed in the office along with other material that could be used in computing various statistical information—probable error, standard deviation, etc.

2. If the reports to the home are to be made at regular intervals, they should not be sent more often than four times a year, in order to allow the instructor ample time to make his estimates and diagnosis.

3. No numerical grades should be sent to the home. If they are requested, the parent should be invited to the school for a conference. By that time the material could have been placed in graphic form, easily understandable by the parent. As far as grades are concerned, they should never be used on the report card unless in the simple form of "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory".

4. Reports to the homes should be informative only in as much as they can be diagnostic and suggestive of improvement.

5. It is desirable that each parent come to

<sup>7</sup> Jones, J. Norris, "Is the Report Card Doomed?" *School Executives Magazine*, 54:291-94, June 1935.

<sup>8</sup> Messenger, Helen R., and Watts, Winifred, "Summaries of Selected Articles on School Report Cards", *Educational Administration and Supervision*, 21:539-50, Oct. 1935.

the school for a conference at least once a year. If his child is mentally deficient, it shouldn't be necessary to mention it in any of the reports. However, the parent certainly shouldn't be left to understand that his child is perfectly normal, perhaps above normal, and that he is doing corresponding work. Such information might reflect dangerously upon the caliber of work expected of him about his home.

6. Reports should always be mailed to the home, and copies of them kept at the school. The parents should be allowed to keep them. This practice helps to keep the cards away from the children in the school, where they would naturally be comparing them, for comparisons often lead to misunderstanding on the part of both parents and pupil. The parents should be called on the telephone and told when the report is being mailed. A call later in the week will verify the receipt of the card.

7. In such courses as Social Science, there are definite educational objectives which, if they are attained, should be reflected in the pupil's attitude and deportment perhaps in that class, perhaps in the corridor, or even in extra-curricular activities.

In view of that fact, the numerical grades on record in the office should not be altered because of these actions, but records should be made of them nevertheless. It would also be well for the social science teacher to include such of this data as he may see fit in the informal note to the parent. In one sense, the real test of a course's value is its functional value outside of the classroom.

8. There should be a normal amount of competitive work in the classroom, and each pupil should keep a profile graph of his own progress. The instructor should compile the averages of the class in order that these may be included on each individual's profile study. Thus the pupil may see what his progress is.

These are not on display for the rest of the group and should not be allowed out of the teacher's hands except for inscribing the

latest datum. This, again, guards against the "inferiority complexes" or "superiority complexes" that may be caused by a taunting display of report cards. From time to time, the instructor should confer with the individual pupil about his profile.

9. Quality and quantity of work should be equally emphasized. This probably seems queer, in view of the fact that quality has always been considered by most instructors as the most important educational objective. It is important, but there is another thing to be considered.

Some pupils may be at least average in most of their subjects with the possible exception of, let us say, science. For one reason or another, they lack some mechanical intuition or natural curiosity which would allow them to enter into the study as enthusiastically as they do into other things. Perhaps the various aspects of science which have been introduced to the pupil are not particularly interesting to him.

Encourage a broad survey of all the different possibilities. Let the pupil "dabble" in this thing for a time, and then let him change to a different phase of study or inquiry.

This situation suggests that these informal records should also include a line about the pupil's accomplishment, either in terms of quantity or in terms of quality. Let this be in the form of a "recommendation," such as one would write for a prospective applicant.

10. As has already been described, let the pupil keep a profile, or some other type of record of his progress. Then, wherever possible let him use this record as a basis for a written report to the instructor and possibly to his parents as well.

11. Last, but not least, let the reporting system be flexible. If you find that one type of conference, or one type of handling works well for one individual or even a group of pupils, use it on them. But why model the whole system to fit one or two? Let it be flexible.

# *The* COSTS OF GUIDANCE in a Secondary School

By RICHARD D. ALLEN

THERE have been many studies of the costs of guidance, but none has told the whole truth. Scarcely a week passes without a questionnaire or an inquiry of some kind regarding guidance costs. In fact, the desirability and necessity of guidance are now generally admitted, but there is still the problem of "How much can we afford?"

This is the problem which confronts every administrator, whether principal or superintendent. He is responsible for the best possible use of public funds. This need must be considered in its relation to other pressing necessities such as supplies, salaries, and buildings—to say nothing of clinics, special education, and what not! He must not embark upon a program without accurate information regarding costs: immediate costs, increases from year to year, and ultimate or permanent costs. "He mustn't buy a car that he can't afford to run."

The usual method of figuring costs is so simple that most people overlook its fallacies. The questionnaire usually reads: (1) How many counselors do you employ? (2) How much of the time of each is employed

in counseling work? (3) What is the salary of each? (4) How many pupils are there in the school? Etc. From such facts are obtained the total salary costs, and the cost per pupil.

By such a method, in one school where there are six class-counselors to fifteen hundred pupils, the total salary cost is approximately \$13,500. Since one-fifth of the counselors' time is spent upon other instruction, the amount charged to guidance is \$10,800, or a per pupil cost of \$7.20.

By a simple process of multiplying \$7.20 by the number of pupils in all of the secondary schools in this particular city—approximately eighteen thousand—the superintendent reaches the interesting estimate of \$129,600! Then he looks at salary cuts, supplies, and a hundred other items, and regretfully says, "Not now!"

The fundamental fallacy of such a procedure is that it presupposes additions to the existing functions and personnel rather than the reorganization of present functions and the present personnel in order to obtain more satisfactory results. *Almost every aspect of a guidance program is now being carried out in some fashion in almost every secondary school in the country!*

But there is usually no proper organization to obtain the desired results, no co-ordination of effort, little or no planning ahead, no personal responsibility for each pupil, no continuity and consistency in dealing with each child, and no continuous program of training for those upon whom the responsibility rests. Records are now being kept, but they are almost worthless for guidance purposes. Tests are administered, but the results are not being used for guidance.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Doctor Allen was recently appointed by Secretary Ickes as expert consultant in guidance of the United States Office of Education. His work will be to promote better guidance methods in secondary education. This article, and others that will appear exclusively in THE CLEARING HOUSE, are one phase of Doctor Allen's work. He remains assistant superintendent of schools of Providence, Rhode Island, in charge of guidance.

Choices of subjects, curriculums, colleges and vocations are being made—sometimes prematurely and without adequate information, often without proper supervision and assistance, and almost always on the basis of precedent, prejudice, pseudo-guidance, and “the good intentions with which hell is paved”.

The addition of a staff of counselors would not solve the problem even if the superintendent could afford it. What is needed is a thoroughgoing reorganization from within, not the grafting on of a counselor or a placement office to salvage the academic wrecks and to find some use to which they can be put, or even to find jobs for graduates. Let us stop scratching at the surface and get down to fundamentals!

The costs of organized guidance should be studied from the point of view of a school administrator rather than from that of an accountant or research worker. As a matter of fact each of the six counselors spends on the average *one-fifth* of his or her time in individual interviews with pupils, *three-fifths* in group guidance instruction in groups of regular class size, and approximately *one-fifth* in other subject instruction.

The group-guidance instruction involves no additional expense, but merely a reapportionment of the instructional functions of the school. Even if it were abolished, there would be no saving involved unless the school day were shortened, teachers discharged, or salaries cut. Even supervised study periods, or spelling or penmanship, would cost as much if used to replace the group-guidance units.

These units were introduced into the curriculum so that all pupils might have the necessary information and training in order to make important decisions regarding educational and occupational choices. The effectiveness of the entire educational program often rests upon wise decisions made in the secondary-school years. No subject in the curriculum is of more immediate importance and necessity than that which pro-

vides such training. It would not save one cent to abolish the group-guidance course. And naturally, the one-fifth of “other subject instruction” cannot involve any possible saving of expense, since this work must be assigned to some teacher.

It appears then, that the only item of increased expense and of possible saving is the one-sixth to one-fifth of each counselor's time that is spent upon individual *interviews*. It really costs no more to have six counsellors who spend one-sixth of their time upon interviewing, than to assign all such work to one counselor with *fifteen hundred* pupils!

It is evident that expense is always increased whenever a teacher is taken out of a classroom situation with thirty pupils and permitted to use the time for three fifteen-minute individual interviews. In fact the process is ten times as expensive per capita. To schedule an individual interview each term for each pupil, with the necessary recording and preparation, requires the addition of one teacher to the faculty of a school of approximately twelve hundred. (Three interviews per period, five periods per day, for ninety school days equals thirteen hundred fifty interviews, but probably twelve hundred is a safer program estimate.) The new teacher will probably be a beginning teacher at approximately twelve hundred dollars, or a cost of one dollar per year per pupil. The new teacher would relieve the counselors of other subject instruction sufficiently to permit them time for interviews.

There is considerable difference between the accountant's estimate of costs, \$7.20, and the actual increase in costs as estimated by an administrator, \$1.00. Some may suspect “sleight-of-hand methods” in obtaining the latter figure, but the method is a matter of actual and approved school practice. To prove the process, take away the time allowance for interviews, reassign the other subject instruction to the counselors, and discharge the new teacher, and you save just \$1,200 and no more.

The counselors may be receiving a maximum salary of \$2,500 or more, but that is not a sufficient reason for discharging a person long in service, or replacing a trained and experienced worker with a novice. It is the teacher last appointed who must be laid off. Sometimes, however, a vacancy may occur which must be filled by a trained and experienced person, the head counselor, for instance, but that situation is not really different from the problem of replacing a department head in English or mathematics, or even the position of a principal. The method of figuring costs is beyond question fair and accurate.

It is fair to ask, however, if this time for interviews is really "additional expense". Who does the interviewing, if any, in the school at the present time? Usually it is the person whose time is most valuable, the principal or the assistant principal, whose salaries average twice that of the average teacher and three times that of the beginning teacher. For such interviews the per capita cost is three times as great as when they are done by the counselor.

Moreover, *counseling and administration simply do not mix*. The administrator is hurried and harried by other matters. He seldom has time to ascertain all of the necessary facts in each case, and worst of all, he usually makes the decisions himself instead of helping the child to make his own decisions wisely. Guidance is essentially an instructional procedure, whether performed individually or with groups, and it is seldom if ever performed most effectively in the administrator's office. Individual guidance at the expense of administration is often not only poor guidance, but is probably the most expensive arrangement possible for guidance such as it is.

There remains the possible alternative of not making any provision whatever for individual interviews. Such a condition is found in many schools. Pupils receive individual consideration only after they have failed, or have become troublesome, or have

broken rules that should never have been made or applied to them, or have become so hopelessly maladjusted that withdrawal seems the only remedy. Such results, many of which could have been prevented if foreseen, are too high a price to pay for apparent savings in expense. Prevention is always the least expensive plan. Most parents are of the opinion that a fifteen-minute interview with each child is a minimum requirement, and that an education costing from one hundred to one hundred fifty dollars or more per year per pupil should require at least one dollar's worth of somebody's time to make sure that the educational garment fits the individual and is in harmony with his abilities, needs, interests, and prospects. If a superintendent cannot sell this idea to his school community, he had better not attempt a guidance program, or even attempt being a superintendent. The individual interview is not an *additional* cost, but a *necessary and integral part of any and every educational program*. It is to the education of an individual, or to the educational program of a school, what the services of an architect are in the construction of a home, or a school, or a business or industrial building. It is not alone a service performed for a student when he leaves school in order to help him to make the most of his opportunities in the light of whatever abilities, skills, and training he may possess. That is only part of the story.

It is an orderly and responsible method for studying the growth and development of people, and for helping them to make the most of their present and possible future opportunities. It aims to promote harmony between the interests, abilities, needs, and prospects of individuals and their educational, occupational, and social environment. Education that fails to take these matters into consideration becomes increasingly academic and impractical and is responsible for much of the waste and inefficiency in every educational institution.

Guidance aims at the *improvement of*

education as it affects each individual. It is founded upon the study of each individual in his activities in and beyond the school. The school with a guidance program is attempting to improve its service to individuals. *Without a guidance program, consistent improvement in personnel procedures is impossible.*

There are two remaining elements in the cost of guidance which require at least brief consideration. Suppose that even an additional increase in expense of one dollar per pupil appears impossible. Can anything be done? The answer is decidedly "Yes."

In a previous article in *Occupations* for October, 1937, the writer showed how any principal, with the permission of the superintendent, could organize a guidance program at least as adequate as that in Providence by increasing the teacher-pupil ratio by one pupil in each class. Even if the ratio is already high, the teachers will find that their burdens will actually be less because of better classification, fewer misfits, more adequate information about problem pupils, more usable and accessible records, better choices of elective subjects, fewer failures, and many other advantages.

A principal who cannot "sell" these advantages to his faculty is incapable of professional leadership. Naturally he must understand the problem thoroughly himself first before he attempts to convert others. It should not be difficult, however, for any principal to relieve a few teachers of a few instructional periods each week in order to provide children with *individual instruction* in problems involving their own personal, social, educational, and future occupational adjustment.

There is abundant precedent for such a procedure in the arrangements for special individual instruction in mathematics and other subjects for pupils who are in need of special help. This is an exact parallel, since in a guidance program, common problems are taught in the group-guidance classes, while problems peculiar to each in-

dividual are handled by means of individual instruction in the interview. These interviews should not be charged to administration merely because such problems are often handled by an administrator. They are by nature *instructional* problems and as such are an integral part of the instructional budget of the school.

The guidance instruction, like that in other subject fields, must be departmentalized if it is to be improved. Such departmentalization requires that functions which have been neglected or mishandled when delegated to the faculty at large, should be re-grouped and delegated to specially-selected persons who are either trained for the task or are capable and willing to undertake the necessary professional training.

There are some few potential counselors in every faculty to begin with, and others must be recruited and trained from time to time to provide additions and replacements. There is no reason why the departmentalization of guidance functions should increase costs any more than the departmentalization of any other subject of the curriculum.

The great danger of departmentalization rests in a logical rather than a psychological and functional relationship of work. A logical but mechanical arrangement would be illustrated by assigning the tasks of recording and research to a statistical clerk or registrar; the interviewing to a counselor, dean, or assistant principal; and the group guidance to a teacher of occupations or social studies.

This set-up will be found in many schools. It smells of industrial and mechanical specialization and is sure death to professional ideals and attitudes because it separates functions which should be integrated, and because it fails to establish personal responsibility for the whole guidance task.

If guidance is to be effective and professional, the person responsible must be entrusted with the three basic functions: (1) Personnel research, or the continuous study of individuals through records of

growth, (2) a constant check through interviews on the continuous educational adjustment of individuals, and (3) the preparation of children for self-guidance by means of a well-planned and organized curriculum of group guidance, continuous throughout the secondary grades and taught by a trained counselor for at least three years. All of this can be accomplished by internal reorganization without additional expense, except for time provided for interviews.

While admitting a possible increase in costs as a result of providing time for interviews, it is necessary to point out that in the absence of organized guidance, it is necessary to set up certain elective "courses" into which pupils are fitted, usually with inadequate preparation for the choices involved, with little or no attention to individual interests, needs, abilities, and prospects, and with practically no safeguards against even obviously unwise choices.

This procedure is very expensive, inefficient, and wasteful, and is the basis for most of the criticisms of our secondary schools. It is also the cause of much unnecessary expense, since such a mechanical arrangement often results in a number of small classes. If these so-called "courses" are abolished, and each subject is made elective under guidance, many small classes can be dropped and many savings effected.

This is not a theory, but an actual fact. In the old Technical High School in Providence, when this plan was put in operation in 1926, it was possible to transfer six teachers to the rapidly growing Commercial High School in spite of the fact that the enrollment was practically the same. When the plan was put into effect in the Commercial High School the following year, there was an estimated saving equivalent to the salaries of five teachers. These savings were equal to approximately *five times* the additional cost of the guidance departments in these schools.

Moreover, during the past five years, pending the completion of new regional high schools, these two school plants had to

be consolidated and put on a double-session program because the main building of the Technical High School was declared unsafe for use. The intricacies of combining these two schools into a double-session Central High School would have been almost impossible without the counseling staff which made possible a guided choice of elective subjects to fit individual needs.

To summarize briefly, the usual methods of estimating the costs of guidance are deceptive and unreliable. The guidance program of a school must be achieved through internal reorganization and departmentalization on a functional basis—by delegating the basic guidance functions to specially selected and trained persons. The building and training of such a staff is at least a five-year task. The only element of increased cost is provision for individual interviews. Actually this is not an increase but a saving in expense in the long run. The real and eventual savings resulting from a good guidance program will outweigh apparent increases in costs.

Guidance must not be regarded as additional functions and additional personnel, but as improved functioning and better use of the present personnel. Administration and guidance do not mix. Guidance is an instructional function—whether performed individually or in groups, and is an integral part of the general educational program of the high school.

The great immediate and permanent needs are (1) improved methods for the selection and training of those who are to carry the responsibility of pupil personnel and guidance work, (2) reorganization of the functions to be delegated to the guidance personnel, and (3) improvement of guidance techniques and practices both in individual and in group instruction in guidance. These needs do not necessarily involve additional expense, but they do require intelligent planning, initiative, and courage to attack tradition and entrenched privilege among the faculty.

Des Plaines Program combines best features  
of interscholastic and intramural athletics:

## NO VARSITY TEAMS

By V. J. WIBERG

IN RECENT years there has been much discussion about the value of interscholastic athletics. Arguments both pro and con have been advanced, but relatively little change has taken place. It is not the purpose of this article to theorize about the relative merits of interscholastic athletics in the college or the senior high school, but rather to discuss its place in the junior high school, and to describe one plan which is in operation at the present time.

When junior high schools were first organized most of them gave lip service to the philosophy underlying the movement, but in actual practice patterned themselves after the senior high schools in many ways. One of these was to incorporate quite largely the type of interscholastic athletics then in vogue in the high schools.

This athletic program usually concentrated the facilities of the school upon one

or two teams in each major sport, drew up a rather heavy schedule of games, and then tried to convince 99 per cent of the student body that it was their duty to attend all of the games and watch the 1 per cent enjoy itself. Unfortunately, this picture still exists in too many junior high schools.

There are several criticisms which might be directed at this type of athletic program.

First, boys and girls of junior-high-school age are undergoing very rapid physical development, and the hard training necessary to build strongly competitive teams may easily over-tax the body and cause permanent injury.

Second, practically all boys and girls of this age are keenly interested in athletics, but under the conventional system only a very few have an opportunity to compete. This can scarcely be justified if we believe that democracy should be practiced in the school.

And third, under the conventional form of interscholastic athletics, the entire student body becomes so imbued with the idea of "beating" someone else that in many instances they became poor losers and poor sportsmen.

Until a few years ago this type of highly competitive athletics for the few was pursued in our school with a vengeance. When we began to realize what it was doing to our students, we decided to discontinue interscholastic athletics entirely and concentrate upon a broader intramural program.

After trying this plan for a year, it became evident that we had lost something valuable. There was a decided slump in

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Almost two-thirds of the three hundred pupils of the Des Plaines, Illinois, Junior High School have engaged in interscholastic athletic games with the teams of another junior high school—on a single day. The explanation: At a typical meet, six basketball teams of the school played short, "interlocking" quarters with six teams of the other school, and substitutions ran high. On the same day many pupils of the two schools engaged in swimming events and a ping-pong tournament. This type of program is followed throughout the year in various sports. The author is principal of the school.*

S school spirit and a general lack of interest and pride in the school. After a number of discussions with several interested faculty members, it was decided that we would enlist the help of the student council and attempt to build a new type of athletic program which would combine the best features of both the interscholastic and intramural programs.

Under the careful guidance of its faculty sponsor, the student council issued an invitation to a junior high school in a neighboring town. They were asked to bring six boys' basketball teams, a group of girls who were interested in swimming, and groups of boys and girls who wanted to play ping pong.

A survey was then made of our own school to find out how many students were interested in taking part in such a meet. Each boys' home-room then elected a captain and manager for its basketball team, and teams were organized which made provision for numerous substitutes. No special practice sessions were held, but the boys were learning many of the fundamentals in their intramural games and in the regular gym classes. The girls were organized in a similar fashion for the swimming meet.

Arrangements had been made for the visitors to arrive about fifteen minutes before classes were scheduled for dismissal in the afternoon. The student council had appointed guides to greet the visitors and take them on a tour of the building in small groups of eight or ten. Inasmuch as the spirit of the whole meet was intended to be one of friendliness, this proved to be an auspicious beginning.

As soon as classes were dismissed the boys' basketball games were started. Only four-minute quarters were played, and as soon as two teams finished a quarter, two more teams were on the floor. This method not only conserved time, but it gave each set of teams a four-minute rest period between each quarter. A score of each game was kept, and although each team tried to win, there

was no pressure exerted by the coaches. Substitutions were made freely, so that every boy who had signed up to play was given an opportunity. The scores were all close, and at the end each school had won an equal number of games and all were happy.

In the meantime, the girls' swimming meet was being held in the pool. There were a series of short races, a few diving events, and some special features which involved retrieving objects at the bottom of the pool. At the completion of these events, all participants, as well as those who had not cared to enter, enjoyed a splash party. When the girls had finished, the boys all joined in a rollicking good swim.

While these events were in progress, those interested in ping pong had been staging an elimination tournament and a series of mixed singles and doubles matches.

The entire meet consumed a period of a little over two hours, and almost 200 boys and girls had had the thrill of active participation in interscholastic competition. Everyone had an enjoyable time, and made new friendships, and genuine school spirit reached a new high.

During the winter, four other meets, similar to this one, were held. In the spring, track events for the boys and playground ball for the girls was substituted for basketball, with equally satisfactory results.

This type of program proved to be so successful that it is being continued as a permanent athletic policy. Our school has an enrollment of about 300 students, and perhaps such a program is especially well adapted to a school of this size. However, it can work equally well in smaller schools, and with some adjustment could undoubtedly succeed in schools of considerably larger size.

Undoubtedly our school is especially fortunate in having a swimming pool in addition to a well-equipped gymnasium, which makes it possible to accommodate a larger number of participants. However, this should not discourage schools with less

equipment. We have visited other schools that have only a gymnasium, and the type of program which has been described worked out equally well under such conditions. If the faculty of a school has the proper spirit, and an enthusiasm for mass participation, many obstacles can be overcome.

Another problem which may cause trouble is the finding of transportation for such large numbers. In our situation this has not proved to be serious. Private automobiles driven by parents and faculty members have solved it in the main. When parents found out what we were attempting to do, they were very generous in providing such facilities.

Once or twice, when driving conditions were bad, it was necessary to charter a bus and assess each student the ten or fifteen cents necessary to cover the cost. We have never attempted to visit a school which was more than twelve miles away, in order to minimize this problem.

Perhaps it is too soon to draw conclusions from an experiment in interscholastic athletics which has only been under way for one and a half years. However, the results seem to indicate several worthy outcomes which we cannot afford to overlook.

1. Every student, boy or girl, who expresses a desire to participate is given an opportunity, regardless of his natural ability. In the past, too many schools have professed to believe in the great democratic ideal, but have reserved many of their facilities for the favored few. Under the conventional setup, the boy or girl with the strong physique, and therefore the one who needed it the least, has been given the most opportunity for all types of sports.

2. With the removal of the pressure upon

winning, and "beating" someone else, good sportsmanship has a chance to become a practice and not just another sermon. If there is any one place particularly favorable for developing the ideal of fair play and consideration for others, it is on the athletic field. We believe that this type of athletic program has brought us closer to a realization of these ideals.

Our students have developed a broader and more tolerant attitude toward the students in neighboring towns, through these friendly contacts. The traditional system of interscholastic athletics more often produced enmity and ill feeling, due to the emphasis on winning games.

The first step in any peace program must be a spirit of tolerance and good will toward those that we do not know intimately. Such a program has little likelihood of success if high-school students view with distrust and contempt those students whose only difference is that they live in some neighboring town.

One objective of the Olympic games was to promote friendly relations between countries and thus to enhance the chances for world peace. Those who have followed the course of these games know that due to the intense rivalry and desire to win, the cause of peace has often been weakened rather than strengthened. The same is true, only to a lesser degree, among many high schools in our own country.

A program of interscholastic athletics such as the one described in this article can only be possible when the faculty of the school are heartily in sympathy with such a program and give to it their whole-hearted support. The faculty of the Des Plaines Junior High School deserves the credit for any success which has been achieved.



### *Drastic Methods*

Many men and women, parents, taxpayers, who should be vitally interested in their school are "too-busy-to-listen". These same persons do listen, however, when they are told that the schools cost too

much. Obviously, according to the laws of salesmanship, we must get their attention—even if we have to use drastic methods.—CALVIN T. RYAN in *Peabody Journal of Education*.

# The Forum-Reading Program

By H. C. PANNELL

*of Portales Senior High School*

AT THE beginning of the current school year a new type of school activity known as the Student Forum was introduced to the students of the Portales Senior High School. This program is an outgrowth of ideas expressed by a number of individual teachers, by a committee from the Student Council, by a committee of teachers, and by the administration.

In many instances the program was explained to parents for their approval or disapproval. As a result, when school opened in September, the purposes and aims of the new Forum program were explained to the pupils.

Briefly, the objectives are as follows:

(1) To help the student develop an interest in affairs and events which reach beyond his individual horizon.

(2) To help the student develop an interest in current happenings and their significance.

(3) To provide an opportunity for students to share and discuss experiences and problems.

(4) To provide a wide range of reading material so that the student will develop a love of reading, and a reading ability and comprehension beyond that he now possesses.

(5) To provide an opportunity for different varieties and types of intellects to be thrown together.

(6) To help students in their choice of reading material.

(7) To provide an opportunity for students to think on their feet while in the presence of a critical group.

Membership in the Forum was elective with the students but nearly one-third of the entire senior-high-school student body participated in this new activity during the first semester. Undoubtedly the proportion would have been larger if we could have financed the program through regular school channels, but a small charge of fifty cents was made in order to help defray the expense of material used in the activity. (This fee has now been eliminated, and membership in this semester's Forum is free.)

The 125 students were heterogeneously divided into five Forum groups. Each group had a teacher as sponsor. The five groups met three times each week during a period of the regular school day. The teachers have been so successful in guiding the progress of the groups that they are now merely spectators, while the students themselves carry on the Forum activities. The period belongs to the student and he can use it as he sees fit.

The time is spent in reading and discussing problems and experiences. At least one period each week is taken up with discussion by the group, which consists of 25 students, of some topic or problem of common interest, while the other periods may be used for reading or exchange of ideas on affairs and events.

Naturally the type of material used in this program constituted one of the most challenging aspects of the experiment. To provide for slow readers and to stimulate interest we needed a good pictorial magazine. We needed a magazine that could tell a story or paint a picture or drive home a

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Pupils, teachers, and administrators contributed the ideas that resulted in the program discussed in this article. Mr. Pannell is principal of the Portales, New Mexico, High School.*

worthwhile lesson—all by way of the picture route. Very little reading matter with plenty of worthwhile pictures was what we needed, and it was our good fortune to secure one such magazine. (There is a field for some enterprising educational publisher. We have looked in vain for a second magazine of this nature and have not found one as yet.)

We also needed something in the field of current events and happenings which would appeal to boys and girls, and we had no trouble in finding several good magazines and newspapers of this type. We needed also to focus the attention of the boys and girls indirectly on local and state history in order to help prepare the way for an appreciation of historical events, and we found several good books (heretofore not available for students) exceedingly useful.

In addition we needed to cultivate in students an absorbing interest in city, county and state news, and this was done by way of the newspaper route. To those who were scientifically inclined we were able to give a choice of several good scientific magazines and news pamphlets.

To take care of the desire to contribute ideas and arouse the desire to learn what is going on in the high-school field, we obtained a magazine that served this two-fold purpose. The vocations were covered by several magazines and pamphlets that dealt with the latest developments in various fields.

The current and latest contributions in literature and writings of all sorts, were presented in digest magazines that condensed the articles.

The sensational side of life could not be overlooked, so we provided a magazine of a sensational nature. We doubted the feasibility of having such a magazine available for students, but happily the students themselves have helped us to overcome this fear—they show very little interest in the sensational magazine. To be sure, when it was

first introduced, they absorbed it because of its novelty, but within less than three weeks it was not used by one-fourth of the students.

It was not our original purpose to use books in this program, but we have found that several types of books are necessary and therefore, we have added a few such books to the list.

Each of the types of material used in this program is subscribed to on a semester basis, and new material for each type comes each week. In this way we are gradually building up a very good shelf of reference material. Each group has access to all of the types listed above, and enough copies of material are ordered so that each student may have his choice of reading material.

The expense of the project has slightly exceeded our expectations, but even so, we feel that by discarding the membership fee of fifty cents, we can enable more students to derive profit from it.

No semblance of the formal class-room procedure has been used in the Forum activity. Even the most confirmed trouble-maker has found something that has challenged his interest and ability. The pupils are enthusiastic about the work.

We have not reached our goal as yet, but we are approximating a nearer solution of the problem. A few have dropped the Forum group, but many have added it to their schedule since it was first introduced.

We are continuing with the program during this semester, but perhaps will make several minor changes.

We feel that at last we are getting results, because so many students have expressed themselves as looking forward to this period during the school day. They know they are assured of worthwhile reading material. They reflect in their actions and attitudes the beneficial effects of a good discussion on events. Many students have developed a genuine and spontaneous interest in reading purely for the joy of reading.

# Thornburn Junior High Helps Pupils to CHOOSE *their* CLUBS

By A. H. LAUCHNER

SEVERAL years ago principal and teachers of the Thornburn Junior High School became aware of the fact that many students were floundering around in clubs. When conferences were held with such boys and girls, nine of every ten reported that they believed they had joined the wrong club. There was general dissatisfaction. Those in charge of the club program set out to remedy the situation.

In the fall of 1932 a new plan was placed in operation. Through teacher, parent, and student suggestions a list of clubs to be offered during that semester was drawn up.

Each child received a copy of the offerings, together with names of sponsors and meeting places. There was additional information, such as special entrance requirements for some clubs and fees for others. These bulletins were passed out at an assembly program where they were explained. Children were urged to take them home that parents might study them. It was suggested that each boy and girl go over the list with his homeroom teacher.

It was announced that every child must visit *three sponsors* before final choice was made. There was a feeling that this plan would in some measure guarantee fairly accurate knowledge of what three different clubs were to be like. It meant that a child might visit the club which he thought he

would like best and two others which seemed less inviting to him.

The three "visiting periods" were held. Club sponsors launched into "acquaintance activities" to put before children what would lie ahead. Accurate records of the numbers visiting were kept. At the conclusion of the visiting days, each student in the school was asked to fill out a club entrance blank. This called for a listing of the three clubs visited, a statement of first and second choices, and the giving of reasons for choices. From these blanks and data kept by sponsors interesting information was compiled.

For years this writer had felt that many children would change their first club choice if they but had opportunity to know more about other clubs. The plan put into operation at Thornburn furnished actual figures.

The visiting period found but twelve students enrolled in Library Club. The second period saw this number grow to twenty-seven, while at the third meeting there were forty-one on hand. Final choices showed forty-three boys and girls joining the Library Club.

Another club had fifty prospective members at its first meeting. This number fell to sixteen, rose again to forty-four, and ended with twenty-nine. A third club started with forty-seven on its temporary roll. This number fell to sixteen, then to eleven, but rose slightly when nineteen selected it as final choice. Yet another club began with but fifteen, grew to thirty-four at the second meeting, and added one more at the third session. Entrance blanks showed forty-three people writing the name of this club as first choice.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *The program for aiding pupils in their choice of clubs, discussed in this article, has had a number of beneficial effects, states the author. Mr. Lauchner is principal of the Thornburn Junior High School, Urbana, Illinois.*

Not all clubs had their numbers changed with such alarming suddenness as the ones mentioned. There were several instances in which enrollments remained very much the same throughout. One club, for example, began with fourteen, grew to sixteen, dropped to thirteen, and finished with fifteen. Another club had forty at its first meeting, forty-four for the second period, thirty-nine for the third, and ended the campaign with a total of thirty-eight.

These figures are interesting, but they do not tell the real story. The significant finding showed that six of every ten children in the junior high school selected as final choice the same clubs they had visited during the first period, but that *others passed up what they had previously thought to be their first choices in favor of second or third clubs visited*. What had happened?

When visiting periods began, many students were not certain which clubs they wished to join. They went to some particular club largely on a basis of guesswork. Some selected teachers rather than clubs. Many went along with close friends. A few, failing to make up their minds in advance, just permitted themselves to drift into any club where their feet took them.

Visiting periods brought exchanges of ideas. Children forgot favorite teachers, and drifted apart from chums. They visited clubs recommended by homeroom teachers, parents, or friends. They had their eyes opened—with the result that nearly two hundred of them decided for themselves that their first thoughts in the matter had not been well grounded. They had not realized just what they did want. And scores of them changed their minds.

What would have been the result had there been no exploration periods for students to visit different clubs? The answer is obvious. Nearly two hundred boys and

girls would have been enrolled in clubs which were not in fact their first choices.

Sooner or later there would have been much discontent. Many would have discovered that they had joined the wrong clubs. One pupil might have been best suited to be a member of the Electricity Club but had set out to join the Nature Study Club because he liked things out of doors. His homeroom teacher would have no way of knowing that he would love the Electricity Club; he hadn't known it himself. Not until he began to hear of its doings would he find out about the activity. Then, he would want to change club membership.

Before this plan for club enrollments was inaugurated, the principal's office was kept busy dealing with boys and girls who had got into the wrong clubs. It was a serious problem. No club program can be effective with constantly changing memberships. On the other hand, there is little wisdom in forcing a child to attend for a semester, or even a quarter, a club in which he shows no interest, when he has a desire to join another about which he has heard.

For five years now, this school has had little or no demand by students for change in club memberships, once the program gets under way each term. This fact has seemed to indicate that the plan has merit, that satisfactory guidance is being effected.

Figures compiled for the five year period indicate that one-third of the student body in Thornburn have been helped annually to wiser club choice. These cold facts do no reveal information that should be added to this story. Students in the school profit from club activity because there is interest. This interest is present because boys and girls are in clubs of their liking. Teachers report far less behavior problems than was the case under the old scheme of things.



### Contribute an Idea

We welcome reports from our readers on successful new ideas used in their schools, for the department, "Ideas in Brief," beginning on page 90 of this issue.

# UTOPIA HIGH SCHOOL of EREWHON, U.S.A.

By MAX J. HERZBERG

RECENTLY I had an opportunity to visit a high school well regarded in its community. The building was situated on the outskirts of a large city. The neighborhood was one that had somewhat decayed, and advantage had been taken of this fact to acquire a considerable tract of ground for a school. The municipally-owned transportation service had in turn altered its bus routes so that students found it easy to reach the school quickly from all parts of the city.

The number of boys and girls in the school, I discovered, was a little below 1000, in accordance with a rigid law limiting school enrolments. The law had been passed some years before by the state legislature, at the urgent instigation of an educational official, one Howard Dare White. Standing in the midst of several acres of ground, some of it farmland, the building took the form of a skyscraper of moderate height with setback architecture, so as to secure a maximum of light. Not far off was an extensive play stadium, providing an opportunity for a great diversity of sport. I noticed that it was in use throughout the school day as well as later.

Conventional school hours, in fact,



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author has indulged in an interesting wish-fulfillment dream in this article concerning his discoveries during a visit to the ideal high school in that convenient country of Samuel Butler's. How nearly does the author's perfect high school conform to your specifications for perfection? Mr. Herzberg is principal of the Weequahic High School, Newark, New Jersey.*

seemed to mean very little. Pupils came early and stayed late. The actual periods of instruction were an hour long, but at least 15 minutes intervened between periods, and the atmosphere of the school was one of leisureliness. Everybody moved unhurriedly, and numerous elevators and escalators facilitated progress from floor to floor.

On every floor there were excellent libraries, and at these students could draw not only books but also phonograph records, stills, slides, and films to assist them in their studies. Many of the young people were at work in groups, borrowing one another's work freely. In one room I saw several teachers gathered around a student who was showing them a new trick he had worked out for developing photographic film. He was obviously doing a good job in teaching.

I was interested to observe that there was no room called a lunchroom. There was, however, an excellent restaurant providing self-service, but the tables had pleasing napery and tableware—and there were no paper napkins in sight anywhere on the landscape. Off the main dining-room were several smaller rooms, and in these groups of students, or of teachers, or of both commingled, engaged in animated discussion and unhasty eating. I asked whether the whole school ate at the same time.

"Yes," I was informed. "We have no relays in this school other than on track."

Perhaps I should have started with the school office first, in accordance with that prime doctrine of the educational fundamentalists, that visitors to a school must always report first to the principal's office and be provided with a pass.

My excuse is that, in the Utopia High School, the characteristic office to be found in all the 26,000-odd high schools in the rest of the United States had been abolished. There was no large room, with a counter the length of it, scattered parents and bad boys and girls in front of it, and several harassed clerks and unventilating windows behind it.

Instead there was a comparatively small and attractive room, with a streamlined telephone switch-board to one side served by a receptionist—a pretty girl who was given one year, no more, no less, in which to get married. She announced my coming to the principal, and while I waited I asked her where the files were, and the scholarship books and the schedule cards and the 72 forms that the Board of Education wanted filled out by tomorrow and the rhythmic mimeographing machines and the clicking typewriters and the teachers with nowhere to go, and the kindly bookmen and the chip-on-their-shoulder parents and the boy who had cut a class in Edmund Burke.

She answered succinctly, "The clerical work is done in a room where the clerks won't be disturbed. You'll see the teachers' hang-out later. Parents and bookmen make definite appointments with definite persons. A boy can't cut a class in Burke. We don't have Burke."

By that time the principal was ready for me, and I was admitted into a room that looked decidedly more like a den than an office. However, he did have a desk, and there were papers on it.

I will not attempt to reproduce completely the stenographic report of our conversation, made automatically by the new style of perambulatory dictaphone I carried with me. Incidentally, as we strolled around the building and over the grounds, I noticed that the principal carried with him a two-way radio set such as police cars are equipped with. He had occasion to use it only once, however. Receiving some sort of message, he replied, "Put that mother into

the lethal chamber and give her William A. Neilson gas. It will do her son good."

He told me of a call received a few days previous from a mother who wanted her son called to the telephone to take an important message. "We'll give it to him," the operator answered. "What is it?" "Well," said the mother, "I gave him two plums to eat with his lunch, and I forgot to tell him not to swallow the pits." However, the principal assured me, the boy is still alive.

"What is your salary?" I asked the principal delicately.

"\$25,000 a year," he answered, "and I earn it too, thinking hard all day long to make sure everything is going right."

"What makes a man a good principal?" I inquired.

"A good principal is a major executive who decides quickly and is sometimes right," he maintained. "Or you might define him as a far-sighted individual who, on due occasion, can develop nearsightedness or even, if necessary, complete temporary blindness. He is also a man who lives on the side of a volcano. He is likewise a person who makes exceptions to rules to which there are, positively, no exceptions. Or else he might be described as a man who is boss but not bossy; as one who has the power to make all the decisions, but lets others decide; who can be a moody, muscular Mussolini, but prefers to follow the lead of Lincoln."

"Do you have to go out much at night?" I asked.

"No, I have a special assistant known as 'Principal's Social Substitute,'" he replied.

"This man, an excellent fellow, holds three doctor's degrees—in education, in pedagogy, and in school craft. He has, moreover, an excellent taste in scotch, a knack for bidding and making little slams, and a gift for soothing button-holing parents."

The radio equipment up the principal's sleeve suggested a query as to television as a substitute for teachers. I learned that the school was completely equipped for all forms of education through the ear and the

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eye, that programs of all sorts were constantly being brought into the classrooms, but that the work still revolved around teachers.

"Somewhere—somehow," he insisted, "there must be flesh-and-blood contact if you want true education. It is not enough that our thousand students see and hear a great genius broadcasting a science demonstration from a New York studio. Unless the genius sees and hears the individual learner too, the electric circuit is incomplete. But the teacher in the classroom, properly trained, can stretch out his hands, touch the boy on one side, and the genius on the other, and allow the crackle of educational current to pass along.

"But we rely even more than that on the teacher here. All other forms of instruction are merely incidental supplements to him. He is still Hamlet and without him the play cannot go on. Give me a good teacher, and I'll present you, if I have to, with this building and its marvelous equipment, with all its textbooks, with the photoplay and radio and television.

"I gave you my definition of a principal before. I'll tell you how to define a teacher as any one of our students must see him: A teacher is one who knows what I want to know; let me learn.

"You may be interested to hear that we have one group of rooms here reserved for the use of teachers' college professors. They come here to take courses with our teachers, who tell them what to teach. These courses are compulsory in-service courses, and unless they take them these professors cannot advance regularly on their salary schedule."

As we progressed around the building the principal called my attention to the mottoes which had everywhere been placed decoratively on the walls, and which expressed, he said, something of the philosophy that animated the school. A few of these mottoes were:

Order is heaven's first law.—Alexander Pope.

O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be

this day: if I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me!—Prayer of Sir Jacob Astley.

Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who haunt this place, give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and inward man be at one. May I reckon the wise to be wealthy, and may I have such a quantity of gold as none but the temperate can carry.—Prayer of Socrates.

Know thyself.—Inscription at Delphi.

Nothing too much.—Inscription at Delphi.

Till I die I will not put away my integrity.—*The Book of Job*.

Every sweet hath its sour; every evil, its good.—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Duty: the most sublime word in the English language.—Robert E. Lee.

Every calling is great when greatly pursued.—Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes.

At doomsday God will look you over, not for medals, degrees, or diplomas, but for scars.—Elbert Hubbard.

Under the freest constitution, ignorant people are still slaves.—Marquis de Condorcet.

Our past will overtake us.—Dean W. R. Inge.

Even the youngest among us is not infallible.—Benjamin Jewett.

When good Fortune comes, do not enjoy all of it.—Chinese Proverb.

He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot reason is a fool; and he that dares not reason is a slave.—Sir Wm. Drummond.

The stars above us and the soul within—these are the two great realities.—Immanuel Kant.

There is nothing more beautiful, more to be loved than courage.—Cicero.

One on God's side is a majority.—Wendell Phillips.

Free speech begins only when persons listen, decently and fairly, to opinions with which they profoundly disagree.—Lord Hewart.

While there is a soul in prison I am not free.—Eugene V. Debs.

Fret not: time cures.—L. R. Johnston.

"As you may have gathered from what I said about teachers," the principal further explained, "I am thoroughly for the individual. We need likemindedness in our democracy, but we must eschew monotony. I prefer Thoreau to Karl Marx. We deny the worship of any state-fetish here, and for this idolatry we substitute the development of the individual as the soundest method of obtaining an efficient social group. Naturally in the individual's development it is necessary to have a measure of unselfishness as a

prime factor. I'd say *love* if it weren't a bit mawkish. Perhaps the loving kindness of the Bible is a sufficient indication of the idea."

I asked what was done about persons of defective mentality, sick souls, offenders. Were there classes in remedial reading? Was there guidance? Did integration help?

In any faculty meeting, I was told, a heavy fine would have been imposed on me for the mere use of these terms. But since I didn't know any better, the principal was kind enough to forgive me. He told me of a book that had been published in 1937, Dr. James S. Plant's *Personality and the Cultural Pattern*, which, he said, largely controlled sound educators' thinking in the field of conduct. He had one sentence handy:

"The severity of the conduct disorder is often the measure of the child's promise of recovery—or at least of his capacity to struggle against the various difficulties that have presented themselves to him."

He went on: "Misconduct is like a fever. Foolish physicians at one time merely tried to kill the fever when a patient was sick. Good ones today regard fever as a symptom, often as a help. When a boy or girl misconducts himself don't look at him. Look at his environment. You wouldn't try to set a man's broken leg when he was underneath an overturned automobile. You'd take the automobile away first."

Much else of great interest is to be found in the Utopia High School, but I cannot do more than just mention in passing the long-distance travel trips made by pupils, in busses or planes owned by the school; the plot of ground that each student is required to cultivate for two years, with a plentiful supply of animal manure, so that he may understand life-growth by direct experience; the course called "Today" given in the last year, with its emphasis on contemporary literature, art, music, movies, radio, inventions, ideas, possibilities; the course on the American Indian, his myths, folksongs, poetry, music, crafts, and customs; the stress laid on problem-solving in all school work;

the splendid and comfortable teachers' offices and retiring rooms; the rooms for sociable gatherings provided for students; the carefully differentiated organization and equipment of the various teaching rooms, and their lack of standardization; the use of vita-ray glass and the general air-conditioning; the camp that is a summer adjunct of the school; the fine theater used by dramatic groups; the fully adequate clerical help, allowing among other things a complete follow-up of graduates.

I'll conclude by telling you the twenty-one traits, experiences, and qualifications a graduate of the school possesses, the principal hopes. This was his list, applying of course to both sexes:

1. He eats with discretion.
2. He can dance.
3. He has acquired a hobby.
4. He knows world history from the American viewpoint.
5. He is politely skeptical and intelligently tolerant.
6. He enjoys beauty in at least one of the arts, classic or lively.
7. He understands the biological process and a modicum of health facts.
8. He can talk pleasantly to an audience.
9. He can write an acceptable letter.
10. He can drive a car or an airplane or both, and he can swim.
11. He can typewrite.
12. He can keep a checkbook accurately.
13. He dresses with taste.
14. He has been an officer in some club or team.
15. He knows how to skip when reading a telephone book or a newspaper and how to study intensively a regulation, a technical magazine, or a poem.
16. His posture is good, as an indication of mental health.
17. He can give first aid.
18. He knows how to use a dictionary.
19. He likes fresh air.
20. He knows what he is going to do next.
21. He has calm.

# School Hero vs. the Cripple

By CARL F. SMITH

THE TAXPAYERS of America, grudgingly or ungrudgingly, contribute huge sums of money for the erection and maintenance of free, secondary, public schools. Administrators of these schools are responsible for the mental and physical development of the pupils. Without a word as to how well these carefully staffed schools justify themselves academically, let us take up the matter of how well they develop the boys physically.

For the express purpose of carrying on a physical education program, expensive and elaborate gymnasiums are obtained.

Now, let's see . . . Mr. Conservative, a not-to-be-fooled taxpayer, says, "I'm glad the new gym at the school is finished. It, together with the new physical education director the board hired, should do the boys of this town a world of good. Of course, I don't expect that it will mean so much for my boy, but it should help my neighbor's boy. Say, there is a smart little fellow. I do hope something is done for him that will give him a feeling of confidence and security, and that will straighten out that leg of his."

The neighbor boy goes to school. He is a frail little fellow, physically handicapped by a leg that needs the right kind of exercise; a boy who acts as if he were unimportant and in the way. He goes to his physical education class in the new gym and participates in competitive games and comes out the small end of the horn—ashamed and made to feel even more inferior. Or, he goes to class and blindly suffers through a series of, to him, unintelligible, routine, exercises some of which he can do and some of

which he cannot. The new teacher feels sorry for him, ignores him, scolds him, excuses him from class, or complains that he is holding the class back.

Mr. Conservative's boy goes to school. He is a fine, intelligent boy with the poise of a statesman and the physique of a Tarzan. He goes to class and participates in competitive games. He wins! He takes exercises; he is the best in the class!

Hard times come to Mr. Conservative and he needs the help of his son whenever possible. His son understands his father's condition and desires to help and at the same time learn his father's business, since college is an impossibility now. Can he?

Well, you see, the school has basketball, football, baseball, and track teams, and this boy is the spark plug of all of them. Now, if he has to do such a niggardly thing as work at home at the expense of a championship for the school in one or all of the sports, something is wrong.

That boy is a poor sport; he has no school spirit; he's letting his teammates down; he is unsociable; he is missing the opportunity of a lifetime to make a name for himself. And, confidentially, he is not being loyal to the new director who has helped him so materially and physically, and who wants a salary raise on the basis of the championship. Why, it's unthinkable!

The pathetic thing about it is, he doesn't, and the school wins the championship. What a fine school they have now that they have a new gymnasium! That championship is worth half the cost of the new building, and that coach—say, give him whatever he asks—he is a world-beater.

Meanwhile the little physically-handicapped neighbor boy says, "Gee, I wish my leg could get strong enough so that I could play with my kid brother."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author teaches in the Minnesota School for the Deaf, Faribault, Minnesota.*

## IDEAS IN BRIEF

Edited by THE STAFF

### *Parents Revise Report Forms*

Parents are collaborating with teachers on the revision and modernization of report cards for the Winona, Minn., schools.

### *12-Month Salary Plan*

Teachers in Fort Worth, Tex., will be paid their usual annual salaries in 12 monthly instalments this year. This variation from the usual 9-month basis was requested of the board of education by a majority vote of the local teachers. While the plan does not result in increased pay for the teachers, it allows them to make a more accurate adjustment between 12 months of expenses and their actual monthly income, and, they hope, to save more of their salaries.

### *6-Man Football Teams*

Small high schools are now turning to 6-man football teams as a means of overcoming lack of athletes and lack of funds for equipping 11-men teams. The 6-man plan was originated in Nebraska only four years ago. Today it is played in all states of the U.S., and Canada. Twenty small high schools in Wisconsin use the plan, and more than half of the high-school football teams in North Dakota are of this type. It is recommended for high schools with less than 200 pupils. The playing field is shrunk to 40 by 80 yards, the playing time to 40 minutes. Teams consist of 3 linemen: 2 ends and center; 3 backs: quarter, full and half. Rules and suggestions may be obtained by writing to THE CLEARING HOUSE.

### *Pupils Drive N.C. Buses*

Approximately 86 per cent of North Carolina's 4,179 school buses are driven by high-school boys—and a few girls. They have had only three fatal accidents in the last four years—a highway transportation record that is believed by authorities to be unequaled anywhere. Each driver must be at least 16 years of age, and he receives \$9.50 a month. North Carolina's transportation cost per pupil per year of \$6 is extremely low, compared with that of other states that transport large numbers of pupils: Texas, \$11.82; and Ohio, \$19.97.—*The Progressive Teacher.*

### *School Merchandising Fair*

A school merchandising fair, held each May, offers practical training for salesmanship students in the Greenwich, Conn., High School. At the opening of the spring semester, the business firms that have agreed to coöperate choose representatives from salesmanship classes. Students receive both practical and theoretical training at the expense of the coöperating houses until the fair opens. The amount of advertising taken in the school paper by the merchants determines their turn to choose free floor space at the fair. Merchants have charge of setting up their booths, but part of this work and all sales promotion are handled by the students. They receive commissions or direct compensation, and in several cases, permanent positions.—CARL J. NEMENTZ in *The Business Education World.*

### *Humor in the Curriculum*

Educating the pupil's sense of humor is a social responsibility often ignored in the high-school English curriculum, said Miss Winifred H. Nash of the Roxbury Memorial High School, Boston, at the convention of the National Council of Teachers of English. Experiments conducted with Roxbury pupils showed that their appreciation of humor generally was in accord with their IQ's, that the majority did not appreciate puns and humorous phrasing, that few pupils recognized satire or whimsy. No series of lessons can be used to teach humor: "Bits of satire read aloud and explained, a letter of Lamb's chuckled over, a nonsense rhyme or a joke posted now and then on the bulletin board—methods like these add a cubit or so to the pupil's sense of humor."

### *Thanksgiving Baskets*

Pupils of the Wilson High School, Long Beach, Calif., and their parents, take part each year in a Thanksgiving drive to provide a generous basket for every needy family represented in the school, and also for as many others as can be supplied. Each homeroom of the school is given the responsibility of providing supplies for one basket. About a week before Thanksgiving a bulletin is issued, containing instructions and a suggested list of foods. A homeroom basket committee asks students to volunteer to provide some of the items,

or to donate cash for items—but care is taken to avoid embarrassing pupils who cannot donate. Prizes of candy bars are given in the final contest for the best-decorated baskets. Community organizations suggest families to receive the extra baskets, and merchants lend trucks for deliveries.

### *Pupils Bring Teaching Aids*

Many interesting and valuable teaching aids for my economic geography classes are obtained from my own pupils. Each pupil chooses a particular product or industry as his term project. Pupils are encouraged to choose the industries in which parents or relatives are engaged. Pupils have brought in such raw materials as asbestos, raw silk, kapok, many types of fibers, etc.—JACOB KLEIN in *High Points*.

### *Textbook Analysis Plan*

The Sacramento, Calif., Senior High School, has a careful plan for reviewing new textbooks: One copy of each new book likely to fit into the program is obtained. It is first listed in the principal's files (which are open to interested persons), and then sent to the proper department chairman. He sees that one or more members of his department review the book thoroughly on special forms which indicate just how and where it may be of use, or why it is valueless, to the school. One copy of the review, and the book, go back to the chairman, and the book is made available to the teachers. Another copy of the review goes to the principal, who sends the findings to the publisher for use in any way he desires.—GEORGE C. JENSEN in *California Journal of Secondary Education*.

### *Propaganda Unit*

Why not use a propaganda study unit to stimulate greater interest in reading and discussion in English classes? Katherine Sommers, English teacher in the Central Junior High School, Saginaw, Mich., asked the question, tried out the idea, and found that it works. Her class started with an oral discussion on advertising and proceeded to a study of newspapers. The pupils paid for a subscription to *Propaganda Analysis*, and are using it as a study guide. Following the success of the experimental unit, Miss Sommers now schedules propaganda study for part of each classroom period for a full week each month.—*The English Journal*.

### *Personal Typewriting*

More and more, teachers of typewriting are encouraging students to bring to class their own

personal work to be typed, such as themes, letters, and reports. Not much time can be allowed for this kind of work until later in the year, however.—DEAN S. THORNTON, *Business Education World*.

### *The Science Section*

The work of the Physical Science Department can be greatly enhanced if the science section provides better for individual differences in students: appropriate reference material for brighter pupils, books and magazines suitable to the mental level of poorer pupils. One method of caring for superior students in science courses involves giving them special library assignments during periods when the instructor is re-teaching a phase of work because of lack of understanding on the part of the other pupils.—A. H. DICK, Grover Cleveland High School, New York City.

### *Restaurant Courses*

Five Minneapolis, Minn., high schools are offering new courses in restaurant employment and cooking this year. Prerequisites are one year of food study in a senior high school and recommendation by home economics teachers.

### *School-Community History*

The school district of the Kelly High School, Chicago, was the subject of a historical survey made by pupils under the direction of their teachers last year. The history of the district's early settlers, and the story of the development of its churches, schools, transportation, and industry were unearthed and made the subject of a printed booklet for community distribution.

### *Armistice Day Pledge*

Realizing that most of our Armistice Day programs are based on ideas and themes that are becoming increasingly insincere, a group of students decided to change the emphasis of their program by centering it around the following pledge: "YOUTH'S NEW ARMISTICE—With a keen desire to see political, economic, and social equality throughout the world, we pledge ourselves to study foreign affairs and international relations that we may understand and appreciate the customs of other people. We pledge ourselves to maintain a progressive, peaceful attitude in our own community that we may serve as better national and world citizens. We pledge ourselves to cooperate with the youth of other nations in spreading the principle of world friendship."—MARY JANE COE, Lincoln High School, Ferndale, Mich.

# AX-GRINDERS' WEEK

Charliehorse High School solves the  
problem of the local pressure groups

By ROBERT B. NIXON

M<sup>RS.</sup> WINDE (pronounced *Wýnd*), of Charliehorse Heights, President of the Ladies Metaphysics Society, asked for suggestions from the floor relative to the campaign for the understanding of the aims of the Society by the citizenry of Charliehorse Heights.

"I would suggest," began Mrs. Philander Stear, "that we not only make it a campaign which will not escape the attention of the adults of the community, but that the campaign be carried into the public schools, and our message be carried home by means of the children to the parents."

The suggestion was put to a motion and carried.

It was not the first time the carcass of some pet of the community had been tossed on the assembly platform of the local schools for the children to view. Dr. G. Willikins Hyde, principal of the high school, while he told the boys to fight like (an almost ladylike whisper) h . . . on the football field, as they would be forced to when facing the big problems of life, had not been noted for his valiant defense of the sacredness of the regular curricular program which the pupils of Charliehorse High were supposed to pursue.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Many a high-school assembly schedule can be enlivened and made more valuable by programs presented by various community organizations. This satire concerns a plan for dealing with groups that can offer little, or that belong more or less to the "lunatic fringe". Mr. Nixon teaches in the Radnor High School, Wayne, Pennsylvania.*

No, when the committee ladies crowded into his little office and pressed him almost to the wall in making their thinly-veiled demands—later announced to the faculty as "requests for coöperation"—G. Willikins did not say, "Scat, you varmints! Take your propaganda elsewhere. Anyway, next year you will have another bee in your bonnets and ask that school time be devoted to it. Remember last year you asked for units to be taught on National Apricot Week, and the price of apricots went shooting up like a skyrocket? I'm tired of this piffle."

But G. Willikins was a diplomat and was holding his job because the teachers' agency had recommended him for the chores he did as one who possessed an abundance of tact. As the pressure-group-surrounded doctor smiled at the ladies, he beamed through his lavender-tinted spectacles, patted his steel-gray locks a bit, asked the ladies to be seated, and said, "I am sure we can always expect something interesting from the Ladies Metaphysics Society. Now what is it we can do to help your good work?"

To Dr. G. Willikins all organizations were doing a good work. He had made only one error in tactfully meeting the "public" during his entire career at Charliehorse, and that was when he had said to the representatives of the Boosters Club, "I am sure we can always expect something interesting from the Boosters Club." It was fully five minutes before he had sufficiently apologized for that slip of the tongue.

The assembly programs throughout the school system were granted by the guardian of school time and little children's educational processes, although he often made his

usual weak defense of "so many things to be done and the school day much too short for all of them."

This was expected by the ladies, for they had heard it when visiting him on other committees. They bore with him patiently while he recited his usual menu of obligations to curricular, extracurricular, and super-extracurricular activities, including coöperation in such projects as the one suggested. All of the Metaphysicists had learned that when Dr. G. Willikins finished his set speech he would grant them their wish, so they beamed their best as he beamed his to the finish.

In faculty meeting Doctor Hyde made his apologetic announcement of the forthcoming pleasurable life experiences for the school during National Metaphysics Week.

He had expected the faculty to accept the announcement as meekly as he had given it—just another of those things brought on the schools by "pressure groups". He was not prepared to have Mr. Ramon Graul ask for the floor and make some demands concerning just *WHEN* teachers of Charliehorse Heights were supposed to do some teaching and thus have clear consciences when they drew their pay checks.

"Really, I do not know, Mr. Graul, but I would entertain some suggestions," answered Dr. Hyde, somewhat embarrassed.

"Well," began Mr. Graul, "I believe we should have an Ax-Grinders' Week—maybe two weeks. Let's keep all these *ism* peddlers out of the schools until those days, then let them have all the time they want, or say a period, at which time they can sell their wares to the youngsters. The rest of the

year we can devote to the real reason why schools exist, not to interruptions for sales talks and propaganda."

"If we set aside a definite time for all these things, then you could say to these committees, 'Come on and schedule your orgy of windjamming, only make sure to come early, for there may be others who will get ahead of you.'"

"Maybe after the kids had thirty periods of a steady diet of this sort of thing they would be as bored as we are hearing it every year, and demand that their parents make one of their 'pressure group' visits to request that we do away with it and all such programs. Perhaps the children will feel, after they have been drenched with the platitudes and pseudo-scientific truths of these spellbinders, that we teachers do have something worth hearing and learning."

"I think that is a splendid idea, Mr. Graul, but we could never call it Ax-Grinders' Week," began Doctor Hyde.

"Well, call it anything you want, but let's have an Ax-Grinders' Week just the same," called Mr. Graul across seven rows of now-awakened teachers.

"I move we have a week as Mr. Graul suggests," purred Miss Mary Maurer, "but that it be called Civic Consciousness Week."

Thus was born Ax-Grinders' Week at Charliehorse Heights.

The children's reaction to it, after the last period on Friday of the week, was as Mr. Graul had predicted. The school day at Charliehorse is now uninterrupted, and Dr. G. Willikins Hyde spends his time supervising teachers and not receiving pressure group committees.



## They, Too, Were Teachers

This year as you faced your boys and girls in the classroom for the first day, did you think that the destiny of each boy and girl, and of the city, and of the nation, and perhaps of the world was in your hands? As you began your duties, did you realize that you were a teacher and that the most influential men of all the ages were teachers? Did

you recall that Jesus of Nazareth, Buddha of India, Confucius of China, Socrates of Athens were great teachers? Did you realize our sense of values is so weak that our history textbooks give Napoleon, Alexander, and Caesar many times the space, many times the consideration, that they have given to the great teachers of the ages?—KERMIT EBY, radio.

# STREAMLINING

## *the English Curriculum*

By ARTHUR E. OPPENHEIMER

**L**EARNING in the area which we conveniently call "English" can become more realistic and meaningful than it has been in the past. This learning needs to be a more active and life-like process than it has been, with greater provision for pupil responsibility and initiative. It can become, too, more closely allied with the realities of the contemporary world in terms of their meaning for students.

For many years English has been looked upon as a body of subject-matter conveniently prepared for pupils to learn. But if the English curriculum is to have more vitality and meaning for children, we can advantageously consider English as certain aspects of experience which emerge from the daily living of boys and girls. The curriculum will then consist of a group of enterprises, profitable and satisfying, undertaken by groups or individuals under the guidance of the teacher.

With this new conception of the curriculum, fundamentals and tools of learning will be called into use to further individual or group undertakings. When lack of tools and subject matter hamper an enterprise, the students will necessarily concern themselves with individual work to supply

needed abilities and to remedy deficiencies. Such individual work, in large part practice, will play an important role in the new program, furnishing abundant opportunity for the acquisition of fundamental skills and information.

Taking into consideration the activity principle and the desirability for closer alliance with the social scene which surrounds the children, I may mention the following kinds of experiences for high-school students in the "English" area:

1. *Publishing school newspapers and magazines.* The student newspaper can interpret school, community, national, and world affairs in terms of their relation to the pupils of the school. More emphasis than is usual should be given to the social situation outside the school.

Publishing a paper is an enterprise in which individuals with many diverse abilities and interests can participate. Responsibility can be shared in the great variety of necessary activities—writing feature articles, sports reviews, interviews, editorials, special columns, selecting and editing contributions, writing headlines, preparing copy, reading galley proofs, making dummies, and checking accuracy of written expression.

The school magazine will provide an outlet for the expression of pupils with a special interest or talent in writing. While the teacher may guide and stimulate these undertakings, he should not cut too many corners for the students. The end result must be the product of the students.

2. *Keeping in touch with community and world affairs through the press.* The use of the newspaper should receive increasing em-

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *In this article dealing with the modernization of the high-school English course of study the author suggests ten plans that involve activities and the relation of the work to the social scene that surrounds the pupils. Mr. Oppenheimer, who until recently was a high-school English teacher, is now connected with a broadcasting company in New York City.*

phasis in the schools, since it is one of the powerful agencies in the motivation of public opinion. It is important that students develop the habit of reading the better newspapers regularly, and be able to judge the validity and reliability of what they read.

The class experience with newspapers should be based on the daily press, rather than on special school periodicals, however well-written and edited, for the prime value of training in newspaper reading lies not in acquiring facts, but in gaining critical skill in reading the press. Emphasis should be laid on how propaganda operates and how public opinion is molded.

Group discussion and field surveys might deal with such questions as these:

What is the effect of the dependence of the press on advertising as its chief source of income? How do advertisers, public relations counsels, and publicity men attempt to obtain favorable content in news articles? How is the content and policy of a paper related to the economic and political philosophy and connections of the publishers? How do the knowledge and opinions of reporters influence the articles which they write?

What are the functions of such news-gathering agencies as the United Press, the Associated Press, and the Hearst International News Service and Universal Service? Why is it difficult to obtain reliable foreign news from many countries today? Why is it desirable to read more than one point of view? Why is it important to know about the background of domestic and foreign correspondents and the conditions under which they work?

What is the value of the publication of original documents in such papers as the *New York Times*? Why is it profitable to read these original sources in addition to the related news article? Why should readers mistrust headlines, since they are not written by the author of the article?

Standards of taste should be established

in editorials. The special column, by such writers as Dorothy Thompson and Westbrook Pegler, which bears some resemblance to the editorial and is becoming increasingly important, should receive the attention of the students.

The group could also make a study of the extent and character of propaganda in the press, determine the various techniques used, and search for specific instances of propaganda in current publications. What antidotes could the group find?

Some attention could profitably be given to current magazines. Informational articles can be considered in the same manner as newspaper articles. Fictional articles should be treated in relation to literature.

3. *Developing discrimination and critical judgment in motion pictures.* The motion picture is a second great agency of mass communication and impression. Millions of children and adults go to the movies every week.

Studies of 10,000 New York children by the Children's Aid Society of New York found early this year that for every child who spends three hours a week reading, twelve children spend three hours a week at the movies. The studies also indicate that 49 per cent of these children go to the movies twice a week, 47 per cent go once a week, 2 per cent go every day, and fewer than 2 per cent never go. Children obviously have a vital interest in motion pictures, and teachers can lead this interest into constructive channels.

Experiments show that movies are influential in affecting conduct and attitudes. Other studies indicate that specific information presented on the screen is quite thoroughly retained by children, and that incorrect information presented on the screen tends to displace correct information previously acquired.

Investigations have revealed biases in motion pictures, but this does not necessarily mean that there is a deliberate effort to influence audiences. For instance, foreign

racers and peoples are usually humorous or in attractive in the movies. Negroes are generally presented in an unfavorable light. War is overemphasized in both feature pictures and newsreels. Military institutions, war preparations, and espionage are depicted glamorously in most instances. Imperialism is glorified.

Leading characters are placed in an atmosphere of glamorous irreality and wild emotionalism. Great emphasis is placed on wealth and social position, and poverty, when presented, is bathed in a halo of romantic glamour. Heroes and heroines rarely are engaged in industry or agriculture. Rarely are they striving to achieve a goal that is socially beneficial. Producers usually avoid treatment of social problems, preferring to deal with the boy-meets-girl formula, mystery, crime, and comedy.

In a general way, of course, films will inevitably reflect the economics and politics of the producers.

The group study and discussion might consider how the content and biases of motion pictures affect them, and the various techniques of propaganda used. The students can make a survey of the content of current pictures and can search for examples of bias. The findings of psychological research may be sought out and considered in relation to specific problems. The students' personal responsibility for getting better motion pictures should also be considered as part of the problem.

Standards of taste should be developed in relation to scenario, acting, direction, and other aspects of the films, and the motion picture considered as a unique art form, not as a piece of dramatic literature.

Useful pamphlets and periodicals are distributed free to teachers by the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (New York City). This material needs discriminate use, however, for it is replete with propaganda.

It is unfortunate that the making of movies by student groups is almost impos-

sible for all but a few schools, for the making of pictures which dramatize aspects of the world in which we live can be a very fruitful enterprise. However, documentary films, newsreels, and certain feature pictures are available to schools, and can be valuable contributions to education.

4. *Learning taste and discrimination in radio programs.* Within the past fifteen years radio has taken its place with the press and the motion picture as a motivator of public opinion. Three-quarters of the families of the United States have radios, and it is estimated that the average radio set is tuned in between four and five hours a day. The vital interest of children in this medium can be directed by teachers into a more discriminating interest.

Students can well study radio as a unique medium of expression. While the technical development of radio has been amazing, there has been a considerable lag in the use to which it has been put. Students can be helped to establish standards of taste for radio programs.

Pupils can make a survey of the content of current programs to find concrete examples of bias. They can consider the personal responsibility of listeners for securing better radio programs.

5. *Contributing to the work of social studies by means of literature.* While it is profitable to relate literature study to the social studies or history program, we should remember that there are other potentialities in literature work which may be more appropriately aroused in other situations.

For example, great works of literature and great men of letters may be considered in relation to the larger social pattern of their age. Reading and discussion of this literature can be oriented to deal with the basic social problems of any period. Study might be concerned with such problems as family relations, economic factors, justice and government, war and international relations, and social, racial, and religious conflicts.

Even literature which deals primarily with character development cannot be thoroughly understood apart from the social scene. Individual experience, as well as the findings of scientific research, can throw light on many of these problems.

It will of course be necessary to deal with these problems in a manner appropriate to the maturity of the group. It may be worthwhile to discover what has been done, as well as what might be done, to help solve these problems.

Quite generally the twelfth-grade course in social studies surveys the field of American history. Literature study and discussion can parallel the history work, giving more meaning to both areas. The democratic tradition and other dominant social trends in the development of American culture can be studied in relation to the work of Lewis, O'Neill, Sandburg, Garland, Mark Twain, Whitman, Melville, Thoreau, Emerson, Poe, Hawthorne, Franklin, and many others.

The typical eleventh-grade survey of European or world history can be supplemented by the reading and interpretation of literature which will aid the understanding of the social trends and conflicts in the development of the western world. While we can not overlook the contributions of the past, we should give due attention to contemporary literature.

6. *Learning discrimination and taste in books.* The value of experience with literature lies not in the mastery of certain literary information, but in the building of a favorable attitude towards reading, and in the development of discrimination in the selection of reading materials. The teacher must be willing to meet the student on the level of his existing taste, and to create more desirable interests through guidance.

A good plan is to set aside a series of reading periods when the pupil may read books of his own choice. A classroom circulating library containing fifty different books costs no more than a set of fifty copies

of one book. The collection should include books which satisfy a variety of interests and various degrees of maturity. Books usually studied in a given grade might be placed in the collection to win their own way. Mimeographed study guides might be given to students to help them in reading a particular type of book.

The teacher should provide occasional conferences for individual guidance in the selection and trend of reading. At the close of the reading periods informal oral reports can be given, when the entire group may profit from the facts and opinions presented by each reporter.

7. *Contributing to the work of other fields.* Principles of written expression are often completely ignored outside the English class. Discrepancy between written expression in the English class and the expression in other departments is not desirable.

The English teacher can profitably direct the written expression required in other fields, giving aid in handling and organizing materials for written reports expected in social studies, help in the preparation of bibliographies, and assistance in note-taking and library work needed in the work of any field.

These activities serve to make the work of the English class purposeful. When the problem is the concern of the entire group, it can be undertaken as a class project. If the problem concerns only a few individuals, it may be considered as individual work under the guidance of the English teacher.

8. *Contributing to the life of the school as a whole.* Help can be given to individuals and groups who are participating in the work of student councils, committees, clubs, assemblies, and other organizations.

Many students, for example, will benefit from help in the technique of group discussion. The publication of school newspapers, magazines, and bulletins, and the presentation of plays can, of course, be profitable contributions to the school life.

9. (a) *Acquiring ability to find and to use needed information from many sources.* It is more valuable and satisfying to have thorough control of the tools of learning than to carry around a mass of undigested information. Pupils need access to encyclopedias, abridged and unabridged dictionaries, grammars, guides to periodical literature, guides to current books, book reviews, and almanacs, as well as current newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets.

(b) *Gaining ability to secure needed information from persons.* Students should be encouraged to get and to evaluate needed information from various individuals in the community, thus acquiring first-hand information as well as skill and confidence in meeting people.

10. *Developing the skills and abilities needed to further group enterprises.* In order to carry on group activities, there will be a recognized need for the ability to write clear sentences, to spell, to punctuate, to do a great variety of things. Diagnostic tests will indicate the nature and extent of individual deficiencies.

There are certain reasonable (and flexible) demands that may be made of students at a given level in the matter of desirable skills. In addition, there are certain students who will have special problems. All of this learning can be individual, with each student progressing in accordance with

his ability and his needs at the time.

The work of both teacher and students can be enormously facilitated by the use of mimeographed study guides. This material can give clear directions and sufficient practice material for learning a special skill. (A well-chosen text-book will serve the same purpose.) With the use of a key to answers, the student can check and evaluate his own work, while the teacher is always available for individual guidance. A second diagnostic test will reveal the extent to which the skill has been learned.

Certain of the enterprises listed here are sometimes present in schools as "extra-curricular" activities for which children receive no "credit". It seems desirable that some of what is now considered "curricular" work should become "extra-curricular", and that the "extra-curricular" activities should, in many instances, become part of the curriculum itself.

Where the teacher is bound to follow a stereotyped course of study and is unable to introduce a program of this kind, he can, nevertheless, provide more opportunity for pupil initiative and responsibility, and find some chance to relate the program to what is going on in the life that surrounds the students. He can also establish certain of these enterprises as extra-curricular activities with the hope that they can gradually be absorbed into the curriculum.



## Bring Crisis into the Classroom

"Bring the world crisis into the classroom" is the suggestion of John W. Studebaker, Commissioner of Education, who believes in making education vital for young people by bringing the more crucial questions into the high-school classroom for examination by the students.

"It is worth any trouble it takes to rearrange and organize the high school or college schedule these days to enable the students to hear first hand the most important pronouncements being made by history-making leaders. The student who missed hearing Chamberlain or Hitler because he was forced by

an inflexible school program to conjugate German verbs or to report on the Elizabethan period of English history, was deprived of some real education," said Commissioner Studebaker at the Office of Education, Department of the Interior. "He missed the significant experience as a close observer of a performance which future historians may never quite be able to tell accurately.

"What is happening today is grist for the mill of the teachers of psychology, sociology, civics and history. There is nothing in the textbooks to compare with it.

# CAN PARENTS

By  
W. H. REALS

## JUDGE *the* SCHOOL?

PARENTS of high-school pupils in three types of communities in Illinois were asked to give their opinions concerning the secondary school. The communities studied were a mining town, an industrial town, and a strictly residential town. A questionnaire was distributed to each of the parents who had completed at least a high-school education. This group of parents surely should be more intelligently concerned about the high school than parents without a similar background.

It was surprising to find that comparatively few pupils had parents either or both of whom had received a high-school education. The range was from 3.5 to 12.1 per cent for one parent only and from 4.6 per cent to 13.4 per cent for both parents. Only 15.8 per cent of the 2,407 pupils enrolled in these schools had one or both parents who had received a high-school education.

The questionnaire contained four parts. The first attempted to secure the opinion of the parent concerning the value of a high-school education; the second, the value of the parents' own secondary-school training; the third, the values of certain subjects of study; and the fourth, the value of

teaching certain controversial subjects. Only 204, or 50.8 per cent, of the parents responded.

### PURPOSE OF A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

The parents were asked to check which one of the four purposes of secondary education listed appeared to them to be the *most* important. Only one was to be checked, but eight, or 3.8 per cent, checked more than one purpose, and hence their responses have been disregarded in Table II.

Parents are in considerable agreement with educational theorists in believing that the chief purpose for the support and maintenance of public secondary education is to improve citizenship. The college preparatory function, although ranking far below, nevertheless outranks the other chief purposes proposed for a high-school education.

The idea that secondary education should be a means of social selection has rapidly lost ground. It would have been interesting to see what the results would have been had parents been allowed to specify first, second, third, and fourth choices.

### PARENTS EVALUATE THEIR OWN HIGH-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Fourteen of the most commonly mentioned values resulting from a high-school education were listed, and parents were asked to check which of those they felt they had secured from their own schooling. Those checked by approximately one-third or more are ranked in Table III.

Apparently most of these people are satisfied that their education has been useful. It is interesting to see, in spite of the fact that formal discipline had been discarded

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *A questionnaire answered by 204 parents of high-school pupils in three types of communities in Illinois provided the material upon which this article is based. The parents voted on such matters as: the chief purpose of a high-school education; the relative importance of various subjects; the teaching of controversial issues; etc. The author of this article is associate professor of education at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.*

TABLE I  
NUMBER OF PUPILS WHOSE PARENTS WERE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

School Community	Enrollment	One or both parents		One parent only		Both parents	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
A	726	87	11.9	53	7.3	34	4.6
B	962	172	18.7	108	12.1	64	6.6
C	719	122	16.9	25	3.5	97	13.4
Total	2407	381	15.8	186	7.6	195	8.2

by educational thinkers, that almost 90 per cent rank "general improvement of the mind" high. It is easily accounted for, of course, for when these parents were in high school, teachers continually justified their subjects on this broad ground of mental gymnastics.

Seventy-nine per cent believe the high school made them better citizens. Thirty-one per cent believed it trained them for parenthood. It would be interesting to know just how this was done.

#### EVALUATION OF SUBJECTS

Many of the subjects commonly studied in high school were listed in the questionnaire. They were followed by statements to be checked by the parents to indicate the importance which they attached to them. These statements were that the subject:

1. Should be made compulsory
2. Develops reasoning ability
3. Has practical value
4. Is cultural
5. Contributes to leisure pursuits
6. Has been useless since graduation
7. Contributes to good citizenship
8. Is of value to a parent
9. Should be eliminated

10. Aids in vocational pursuits
11. Is a waste of time
12. Should have more time spent on it.

Grammar was considered important enough that 72 per cent of the parents indicated that all pupils should be compelled to take it. It was considered above all others in this respect. Health and hygiene followed closely, however, with 69 per cent who believed it should be required of all. Literature ranked third, with 50 per cent.

Grammar and geometry were regarded about equally by parents as the subjects which helped them to secure and hold a job. They were outranked only by business training. Grammar was ranked above all other subjects as the one on which more time should be spent. This was followed very closely, however, by home management and health and hygiene. Grammar, therefore, seems to be considered by modern parents as a most important subject.

Geometry was considered by 54 per cent of the parents for its power to develop reasoning. It ranked above all other subjects in this particular. It was followed very closely by algebra, for which 45 per cent of the parents voted. On the other hand,

TABLE II  
THE CHIEF PURPOSE OF A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Purpose	Number	Per cent
College preparation.....	27	13.8
Vocational preparation.....	22	11.2
Citizenship.....	132	67.3
Improvement of social position.....	15	7.6
Total	196	99.9

more parents (28 per cent) said that they had had no occasion to use geometry since graduation. Algebra, however, ranks about equally high in its opportunity for subsequent use.

Latin outranked all other subjects in its rating as a time waster. Nevertheless, parents were very generous, for but very few rated subjects on this basis. Modern languages and algebra ranked second. The percentages were respectively 7.3, 2.9, and 2.9.

Modern languages were outranked only by literature in their cultural value. One-fourth of the parents would compel pupils

tical as home management, business training, or health and hygiene.

Health and hygiene ranks only second in importance to grammar, if judged by the number of parents (68.6 per cent) who feel that all should be compelled to take it. Approximately one-fifth rate it as a practical subject. It is regarded as of less importance in this respect than business training or home management. Twenty-four per cent felt that more time should be devoted to it.

Literature ranks first for its cultural value. It is so regarded by 61.2 per cent of the parents. The modern languages,

TABLE III  
PARENTS' EVALUATION OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

<i>Value</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Useful since graduation.....	186	91.1
General improvement of the mind.....	180	88.2
Made for better citizenship.....	162	79.4
Caused literary appreciation.....	127	62.2
Helped to secure a better job.....	110	53.8
Made for better use of leisure time.....	104	50.9
Help in meeting economic and social problems.....	75	36.7
Trained for parenthood.....	67	31.8

to take them. Five per cent feel that more time should be spent upon them.

Civics, as one would naturally suppose, leads all the other subjects in its value as preparation for citizenship. Seventy-two per cent feel it has a distinct value for this purpose.

It is somewhat difficult to understand, however, in view of the fact that 67 per cent of the parents felt that preparation for citizenship should be the chief aim of the secondary school, why only 50 per cent of the parents feel that this subject, whose chief value they say is such, should be required of all pupils. More people would require grammar to be taught than civics. Approximately 17 per cent feel that more time should be spent on civics.

Industrial arts, according to the parents' opinions, are chiefly valuable as pastimes. They are regarded as not being as prac-

tical, and grammar follow, and are ranked in that order. Fifty per cent feel that all should be compelled to take literature, and 16 per cent feel that more time should be devoted to it.

#### CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Teachers are always sensitive to the probable reaction to their teaching of controversial issues, and many of them have become spineless and colorless because of it. So far as the parents are concerned, would they need to be so?

Parents were asked whether or not the high school should teach certain specific things and whether teachers should be allowed to express their own opinions. Their reactions are given in Table V.

It would appear that the vast majority of parents are willing for the teachers to teach historical facts, yet when they are

asked whether or not they are willing for the schools to discuss communism and fascism, less than 50 per cent are willing to have them do so. Seventy per cent do not wish teachers to express their opinions.

Nearly one half do not wish to have sex problems taught. Many of these who replied in the affirmative did so only with reservations. A great many comments were "very delicate", "handle with care", and also "use specially trained teachers". A few were more emphatic. Only 42 per cent wish the school to give non-sectarian religious instruction.

#### SUMMARY

It would seem that the parents of high-school pupils who have themselves gradu-

ated from high schools are fairly well satisfied with the high school today. They are in remarkable agreement with the opinion of educators that the chief purpose of the secondary school is to improve citizenship.

Parents also seem to feel that their own high-school education has been useful to them since graduation. How much can their opinions be used for a reconstruction of secondary education?

Can we consider seriously their opinions when they concern what we shall teach? More parents (88.2 per cent) regarded their own high-school education of more value in improving their minds than in making them better citizens (79.4 per cent). Grammar they consider of far more im-

TABLE IV  
PARENTS EVALUATE SUBJECT MATTER

<i>Criteria for Evaluating Subject Matter</i>	<i>Algebra</i>	<i>Geometry</i>	<i>Composition</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	<i>Literature</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Modern Languages</i>	<i>Civics</i>	<i>Health and Hygiene</i>	<i>Business Training</i>	<i>Home Management</i>	<i>Manual Training</i>
1. Compel all students to study this	31.8	23.0	47.0	72.0	50.0	11.9	22.5	49.9	68.6	41.2	34.8	16.6
2. Develops reasoning ability	45.5	54.4	15.1	5.3	10.6	6.8	3.9	11.9	4.3	18.6	9.3	3.4
3. This was very practical	8.8	9.8	15.1	20.5	11.3	2.9	7.3	16.6	22.5	26.9	27.9	21.1
4. Excellent for culture	4.3	3.9	17.6	27.4	61.2	27.4	38.2	9.8	9.3	4.9	6.3	1.9
5. A fine pastime	1.4	3.4	4.9	1.4	21.2	2.9	4.4	1.9	.49	.49	3.9	33.8
6. Have not used since graduation	27.4	28.4	2.9	—	3.4	22.7	5.9	.9	—	2.4	.09	3.9
7. Prepares one to be a good citizen	.9	.9	1.9	5.9	9.3	1.4	1.4	72.5	20.1	16.2	15.2	2.9
8. Solved my problems as a parent	.9	1.4	.9	2.9	1.9	—	.49	.9	8.3	2.9	16.2	.49
9. Eliminate from program of studies	2.9	2.4	—	1.4	.4	8.8	2.4	1.9	1.4	.9	.9	—
10. Helped me get and hold a job	8.3	11.8	9.8	11.9	5.9	5.3	6.8	5.9	6.8	26.4	1.9	2.4
11. A waste of time	2.9	1.9	—	—	.4	7.3	2.9	.9	.9	—	.4	—
12. Spend more time on this	6.3	6.3	17.1	28.9	16.2	2.4	4.9	16.6	24.0	20.0	28.0	3.0

TABLE V  
PARENTS' REACTION TO TEACHING OF CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Should the high school:	"Yes"	Per cent
1. Discuss communism and fascism.....	97	47.5
2. Allow teachers to express their own opinions.....	61	29.9
3. Teach historical facts.....	149	73.0
4. Teach "our country right or wrong".....	56	27.4
5. Teach sex.....	112	54.9
6. Give non-sectarian religious instruction.....	86	42.1
7. Train pupils in problems of parenthood.....	120	58.8

portance than objective studies indicate that it is.

They still believe that educators give an importance out of all proportion to their value to the languages and abstract mathematics. The majority of them would still not give teachers the opportunity to discuss current pressing problems.

It is the tendency of the schools to take parents more and more into their confidence. The Coöperative Study of Secondary School Standards asked parents of all pupils in certain grades in selected secondary schools to judge the schools which their children attended.<sup>1</sup>

Curriculum specialists advocate the securing of lay opinion. It seems to the writer that this study should indicate that such practices have serious limitations. Even when parents have been highly selected, as they were for this study—parents who themselves had had high-school training—their opinions seem at considerable variance with the commonly accepted views of professional educators.

Parents would, for example, compel all pupils to study grammar, and almost 30

per cent of them wish more time spent on it. They still rank high certain traditional subjects for their disciplinary values. Only a relatively insignificant portion of the parents would eliminate any subjects from the curriculum, but for the most part they would wish more time to be spent on all subjects. Languages rank high for their cultural value.

Can we use the parents as certain educators would indicate we should? It is very clear to the writer that parents' opinions about the secondary school can have only one value, and that is, to give us an understanding of their beliefs and points of view, and thus be the first step in a program of bringing them to an understanding of the real problems which all educators face.

Parents should be informed and led in the direction of the ends that competent educators have set up. We shall be handicapped in our progress if we fail to carry them with us, for apparently, from this brief study, they seem very well satisfied with the *status quo*. And we can secure their support and make progress only as we become the leaders in directing their thought and understanding along the lines which we have previously set up.



### A Source of Library Funds

Each school unit should make an effort to have a professional library. This is often accomplished by the teachers' pooling their buying under the direction of the principal. The books and magazines are made accessible to all the teachers. Often a

small per cent of all gate receipts of athletic events is taken for the purpose of purchasing books and magazines for the teachers. If the teachers' salaries are very low, this practice usually meets public approval.—*The Oklahoma Teacher*.

# THE EDUCATIONAL WHIRL

*A department of satire and sharp comment*

*Contributors:* ROBERT B. NIXON, EFFA E. PRESTON, CECIL W. ROBERTS, NAOMI JOHN WHITE, CAL M. WELLS, WALTER S. MCCOLLEY, and GRACE LAWRENCE

"A good teacher makes himself progressively unnecessary."—Ed. Journal. Yes, but not a wise one.  
C. W. R.

## *Big Moments*

1. The thrill that comes after you give directions to a class and five or ten of them ask to have the instructions repeated.

2. The ecstatic heart throb of receiving your new salary contract and finding it contains the same figure, after the principal has told you he recommended you for a special raise.

3. The joy of being accused by your co-workers of bringing politics into the school when you introduce a controversial issue to social science classes.

4. The inner light that accompanies recognition of the fact that raises in the local school system are dependent on political pull rather than merit.

5. The exquisite sensation of listening for the one thousandth and fortieth time to the same original method of introducing an assembly: "The program is presented today by the 8X Class."

6. The stirring delight of receiving the same financial return on a \$5,000 college education investment as a teacher who received her license years ago by taking examinations at the close of one summer session.

7. The pleasant tingle that accompanies a note from the principal reprimanding you for parking in the wrong place when you came to school on the bus that day.

8. The wave of emotion that permeates your being on discovering the janitor has again left your erasers in the waste basket.

9. The delighted chuckle that accompanies the discovery that the mice have tried to share your lunch.

10. The joy of accomplishment in teaching the effect of climate in the South while your room is at 50 degrees.

11. The elation of being able to stand on your feet after acting as chaperon for a class tour that covered the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the Museum of Natural History, the Woolworth Building, Central Park Zoo and the Aquarium.

G. L.

## *Unexpected Pleasure*

Teachers were termed "the elite of the nation" by Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen, speaking in St. Patrick's Cathedral at the time of the N.E.A. convention in New York City. This news item will please many teachers. Others will be startled.

C. M. W.

It's the last teacher to join a professional organization who is the first to yell about a salary cut.

N. J. W.

## *Problem Teachers*

There are two kinds of teachers that make us stand like a stalagmite with all our chins up and bite our nails in rage:

(a) The one who knows just what's wrong with everything and exactly what to do about it, making Solomon look like Simple Simon.

(b) The one who always wears her brain at half mast and from whose brow the fog is never lifted. She never realizes there's anything wrong with the educational cosmos, and wouldn't be interested if she did.

E. E. P.

Forward pass means to the average high school teacher, who has learned to interpret the signals given at the beginning of the term, that she is supposed to pass all football players.

N. J. W.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Among the contributors to this department are superintendents, high-school principals, and teachers. The educators whose writings appear here almost invariably have a serious point to make, but have chosen satire and humor as more effective methods of making that point. The editors of THE CLEARING HOUSE do not necessarily endorse the points of view expressed here.*

## *We Need Better Theme Songs*

What is a county institute or a district convention without a theme song? At one convention this year the golden text has been omitted. Was it because last year's "Education for Dynamic Citizenship" was lost in the shuffle of speakers and we went away to find it was merely another opportunity for administrators and professors to sell their wares?

R. B. N.

Don't ever argue with a school board. You'll save time and accomplish more by staying home and reading Hugo's "The Total Perversity of Inanimate Objects."

E. E. P.

## *Ready to Start*

*Principal:* I am sure we are ready to start the school year in a splendid manner. Meeting is adjourned.

*1st Teacher to another:* The chairs in my room still wobble. I asked to have them repaired.

*2nd Teacher:* I've spent the summer thinking up units. But the janitor is still thinking about putting those new electric light bulbs in my room.

*3rd Teacher:* I drew plans for tables for my room, at Mr. Aspires' request, but the carpenter hasn't made them yet.

*4th Teacher:* Last March I turned in my requisition for books and they tell me in the office not to expect them for several weeks.

*5th Teacher:* We forget the progressive teacher can get along for years with a few orange crates. Or do you prefer egg crates? They seem more intriguing.

R. B. N.

## *A Course They Overlooked*

Why doesn't some progressive Teachers' College institute a course which, like the cue sheets provided pianists in old time movie theatres, will guide new teachers into the most approved techniques of building up acquaintance lists in new towns? A big thing could be done in this field.

W. S. McC.

## *Their Own Medicine*

Did you hear about Principal Wilkens? I mean before he was put away. He was a great old guy. Too bad about the breakdown. He wanted to make his old fossil teachers realize what the kids in school

had to go through every day. "Intramural visitations" he called it.

Bright idea—but he forgot that making teachers go around the clock as pupils, do homework, stay after school, and all that would disturb all the old jealousies. It was a bombshell. Poor chap. He had such good ideas, sometimes.

C. W. R.

## *Dissenting Opinion*

A suggestion to school administrators: Why not give tired pedagogs their heads when institute and convention time rolls around and say, "You're getting two days off with pay. For heaven's sake don't look at, speak of, or think about school till you get back. Good-bye".

W. S. McC.

A teacher this summer experienced the same feeling Johnnie has when she refuses him permission to leave the room. When on a tour, the bus driver refused to make a rest stop when requested. Travel certainly does educate.

R. B. N.

## *Footnote for a Test Paper*

"Do you know, Johnny, why you can't get your Latin lesson? You are a numskull, darling; you have gray worsted for brains. You are going to spend your whole, happy life managing a press in a paper factory. Why are we fooling around here with the passive periphrastic?"

N. J. W.

It's a strange thing that when a teacher gets an original idea (not that many of us ever do) and it's a success, it's immediately claimed by the Central Office, some supervisor getting the credit. If it's a flop, the teacher is advised to follow the course of study more closely.

E. E. P.

## *Sauce for the Goose*

A group of educators is sponsoring a series of talkies to teach children correct "Human Relations" (better known as the Golden Rule in the Archaic days). Why not let the teachers study the films very carefully themselves before injecting these ethical vitamins into the children's diet? If after six months of earnest study the teachers find the films have improved their own "human relations"—especially toward their colleagues—they might try showing the pictures to the children.

R. B. N.

*Bilthoven, Holland's International*

By  
KEES BOEKE

## Children's Community

THE INTERNATIONAL Children's Community" is a plan for the extension of the existing "Children's Workshop Community" at Bilthoven, a garden village near Utrecht, Holland. During the last twelve years this community has grown from a small group of children to its present size. Now there are 120 boys and girls from the age of two to eighteen years, and a group of 33 collaborators.

Both from the point of view of educational method and from that of organization this group carved out its own way, being led from year to year by the practical demands of the growing work.

The children take a great deal of responsibility for arranging and carrying on the life of the community. They conduct a weekly meeting, together with the teachers, where arrangements are made by unani-

mous decision, instead of majority vote, to insure order, regularity, and quiet, intensive work.

They keep the building clean, as there is no staff for this work. They make furniture and apparatus useful in learning and teaching, and they grow large quantities of vegetables and fruit. In addition, they do all other kinds of practical work as the need for it arises in the community. Thus, for instance, they built—under the guidance of a qualified teacher—two large hot-houses to increase the output of the vegetable garden. In all these ways they are trained daily in the art of living together in great freedom, but they are also trained in careful recognition and consideration of the interests of others and of the good of the community as a whole.

The intellectual work has been arranged according to a system which assures sufficient control, yet at the same time allows the children freedom and individual choice in developing their natural bent and talents.

A careful record is kept of all work done by each student, so that he and also his parents and the teachers can see what has been accomplished and what yet remains to be done.

Great stress is laid on the study of languages. The following are taught: Dutch, English, French, German, Latin, and also Esperanto. All children, at the age of eight or nine, take up the use of Esperanto as an auxiliary language. By the simplicity of its grammar and phonetics it forms an easy first step and a good foundation for the study of foreign languages. It also enables the students to correspond with children in all countries of the world.

For some years the Bilthoven group has

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Those of us who look somewhat despairingly on this world of contention and imminent coercion and mass murder must be struck by the quiet courage of the determined men and women who grimly and yet optimistically proceed with constructive steps toward world comity and understanding. In an interview with the author of this article, the editor expressed his admiration for the project initiated in these darkening days by Boeke and his associates. "The night may come," he replied, "but while there is still light I will work." Readers who are stirred by this venture and who wish to know more of it should write to Donald B. Watt, 817 Comstock Avenue, Syracuse, New York, for a copy of The Children's Workshop Community, by Kees Boeke, 25 cents.*

P. W. L. C.

felt the desire to extend the aim and scope of its work by making it international. Up till now its children have been almost entirely Dutch. It is true that they represent all circles of society: rich and poor, intellectuals and manual laborers, Roman Catholics, Protestants and Jews, and it is undoubtedly of value that these children of such varied backgrounds live and work together happily in a harmonious and friendly spirit, achieving good work in all the varied subjects. The fact remains, however, that in the Workshop Community, as in nearly all schools, the children have so far been educated in "a national compartment". The Bilthoven group has become more and more convinced that something else will be needed if mankind is to overcome the terrible difficulties of the world situation today.

It has proved impossible to solve the problems of world organization from a center like Geneva. This is not to be wondered at, for apart from the process of organization from the center, there must be developed another process from the periphery, which will prepare the individuals to become conscious of belonging to the whole human family.

Until now education has made children ready to fulfill their tasks as citizens of their own nations. Henceforth it will increasingly have to face the problem of fitting them for their bigger and more complex responsibilities as citizens of the world. This will require not only knowledge, but understanding, tolerance, and sympathy. It cannot be taught; it must be experienced. Therefore it is proposed to provide an opportunity for children of different nations to grow up together in one community, where they will work together intensively as well as extensively, and learn to know the character and culture of other nationalities.

It has already been said that in the Bilthoven community the children are brought face to face with the problems of community-ordering, and also that the method of working which is used there lends itself very

well to individual development and work.

As a result, it was decided a few years ago to extend the scope of this work by creating an International Children's Community in the immediate neighborhood of the present buildings.

The distinctive features of this International Children's Community will be the following:

1. There is to be a central group of buildings housing the auditorium, gymnasium, library and reading room, laboratories, workshops, etc., which all the children will use.

2. Within easy reach of this center there are to be a number of schoolhouses, in each of which lessons in all subjects will be given in one particular language: English, French, German, etc.

3. On the same campus there are to be a number of small "school-homes" where the children will live in family groups. In each of these one language will be constantly used and a national culture will be represented.

4. When a child from a particular country, i.e., America, comes to the Community he will first be placed in a school-home where his own language is spoken, and will have all his lessons in the corresponding schoolhouse. During this initial period he will get used to the system of work of the Community and at the same time will study one foreign language, perhaps French, intensively.

If after one year he is far enough advanced, he will be placed in a French school-home and have his lessons in all subjects in French in the schoolhouse for that language. During that year or those years he will learn to speak French fluently. If he wants to study German also, he will then begin with the study of that language, and as soon as he is far enough advanced he will move on to a German school-home and a German school-house. Because of the system of study which is used in Bilthoven, his regular school work will continue without inter-

ruption, independently of the language in which the study is carried on.

5. A Teachers' Training Institution is to be formed, where qualified teachers from different countries can come for a period of two years of additional training to fit them for work in a Childrens' Community. The first year they are to have various courses of lectures, but the second year their time will be taken up largely with practical work.

These student teachers will form a valuable added staff to maintain the "language atmosphere" in each particular school-home, and will help in the teaching of the different subjects. Further, it is hoped that some of these teachers will carry the thought of the International Children's Community back to their own countries, possibly starting similar work there.

6. Each school-home and schoolhouse will be well-equipped, so that the children of other countries living and working in them

will get a real insight into the geography, history, art and music of the country concerned.

7. As soon as possible a children's museum will be started, where objects of interest to children will be collected from all over the world and used as demonstration and study-material in special lessons given in the subject-rooms of the museum. Through the coöperation of various bodies and persons in different countries, it should be possible soon to gather valuable collections, which, incidentally, would prove useful to schools of the surrounding district, and thus make the International Childrens' Community a center of influence.

8. In the central buildings and on the playing fields, in the vegetable garden, etc., Esperanto is to be used as an auxiliary language, in order that all nations may meet on an equal footing, without any of them being put in a privileged position.



## Recently They Said:

### *Report from Sing Sing*

The records of Sing Sing Prison indicate that most of the inmates did not even complete the sixth grade. . . . While no one denies the necessity of teaching academic subjects, there are, on the other hand, many children who show no proficiency in purely academic work yet possess the ability to absorb other types of knowledge.—WARDEN LEWIS E. LAWES in *Education Digest*.

### *People-Minded Teachers*

In a world of machines and people we need teachers who are people-minded and machine-minded—not scholars but human beings. . . . It may even be that for dull children we need some dull teachers.—ERNEST W. BUTTERFIELD, addressing A.A.S.A. convention.

### *Cardinal Principle No. 1*

The most important area of experience is found in the field of health. This vital responsibility has never been allocated to the public schools. It is true that at times we have done a little work in the

field of health, but it has never assumed the place of importance in our schools that it demands. In 1918 when the cardinal principles of education were formulated, health was placed at the top of the list. It still remains at the top of the list—but nothing has been done about it.—BUTLER LAUGHLIN in Chicago Teachers Union radio address.

### *How to Get Liberals*

It is too much to expect to obtain the services of teachers with a desirable social philosophy until teachers are given a living wage, some degree of security of tenure, and a greater degree of academic and personal freedom. Yet the need for teachers with a liberal social philosophy is vital.—FLOYD W. REEVES at Conference on Business Education, University of Chicago.

### *That Second Step!*

The moment academic freedom is recognized as a reality, hundreds of thousands of teachers throughout the length and breadth of the country will have to be taught how to use it.—C. E. HAGIE in *The School Executive*.

# *A Southern Junior High School's Unit on* **RACE RELATIONS**

By

D. LEON McCORMAC

IN OUR city the population is about 37 per cent Negro. The whites and the Negroes must depend upon the same governmental institutions for control and protection. Both races are affected by business fluctuations. Both are affected by economic and social progress. Both must suffer the consequences of the spread of disease. Thus, the two races together must assume responsibility for social change that seeks more effective means of providing protection, security, and happiness for all members of our democratic society.

When any two races live in the same community there must be mutual understanding, tolerance, coöperation. Otherwise there is dissension, strife, and insecurity.

Prejudices are usually traditional. Hence, they are absorbed by the young and thus perpetuated. Sympathy and understanding are born of an open-mindedness that constantly seeks truth and attempts to render decisions that are fair and just. Such sympathy and understanding, like prejudices, can be absorbed by the young.

Believing that our two races should continue to coöperate in a mutual effort to assist each other in the solution of economic and social problems, we decided to introduce into our curriculum at Wardlaw Junior High School a unit on race relations.

We desired that our pupils understand



EDITOR'S NOTE: *The experimental unit discussed in this article was so successful that it was made a permanent part of the curriculum, writes Mr. McCormac, who is principal of the Wardlaw Junior High School, Columbia, South Carolina.*

something of the Negro's heritage; his economic status; his contribution to art, literature, music; his educational opportunities; ways in which he might improve himself as a citizen; something about the moving forces in his life; his ambitions, and his outlook for the future; what the whites might do to aid him in his struggle to elevate himself to a higher plane of living; and something of our dependence upon each other in the general improvement of community life.

Miss Eva Seawright, chairman of the Committee on Social Studies for the junior high schools of Columbia, first introduced the unit in one of her eighth-grade classes. Before approaching the work with pupils, she accumulated a wide range of materials to which references would likely be made. These included books, pamphlets, magazine articles, statistical studies and others.

The class discussions began when the question was raised as to whether or not the Negroes voted. Immediately the pupils wanted to know to what extent Negroes did vote, and whether or not members of the Negro race enjoyed the same privileges as did the whites. Certain pupils were chosen to make investigations on these points and later report to the class their findings. Enthusiasm was so spontaneous from the beginning that we were convinced that these young people were concerned about their black neighbors and desired to understand and help them.

These pupils were familiar with the general status of the Negro. But when they began to seek causes of certain conditions surrounding the life of the modern American Negro they began to see the need of

delving into his African background, the introduction of the Negro into American life, and his status and achievements prior to 1865. The question of the ills of slavery naturally came up for consideration. Involved were the attitudes of famous persons, such as Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Thomas Nelson Page, and Governor Edward Coles of Virginia.

Pupil committees were organized to look up material on the various phases of this background. Pupils traced enthusiastically the history of the American Negro from his African environment up to the present time, and thereby acquired an understanding of events that contributed to his present state.

In order to understand clearly contemporary Negro life, it was necessary that a great amount of data be compiled. Again various individuals and pupil committees searched for material on such subjects as "The Low Wage Scale and Living Standards", "Poor Health", "High Mortality", "Expenditures for Negro Education", "The Negro and the Ballot".

From these studies the pupils became familiar with the unsanitary conditions that are common in certain Negro residential areas. By field trips they observed the large sizes of families who exist on very low incomes, families who are poorly nourished and inadequately clothed. They observed conditions that would naturally add to the spread of disease even beyond the Negro areas.

From interviews with parents and other adults the pupils gathered information as to the treatment given Negroes in the courts, the opportunities of Negroes to accumulate property and extend their economic independence.

From statistics pupils learned of comparative expenditures for the education of Negroes and whites, the per cent of Negroes of school age who were enrolled in school, the curriculum offerings in the Negro schools. A group of pupils, by arrange-

ment, visited a large Negro high school. There they were shown classes at work in various academic and vocational departments, including the shops, the laundry, the home economics room, and others. Following the excursion through the school the pupils were served a light lunch by the Negro girls in the department of home economics. This visit aided the white pupils to appreciate the value of extending educational opportunities to the Negro.

A group of pupils visited the Negro Y.W.C.A.; another group visited the Negro branch of the local public library; and another the reform school for girls, and the reformatory for colored boys. Reports on these visits were brought back to the entire class, where general discussion followed. These discussions involved such topics as (a) the difference in equipment provided for the work of the two races; (b) handicaps to successful work; (c) accomplishments in spite of difficulties; (d) opportunities for progress if financial and moral encouragement were given.

Pupils interviewed prominent Negro citizens of Columbia to learn their opinions on problems confronting their race, and the efforts being made to solve them. Among those interviewed were the supervisor of the colored department of the W.P.A. in South Carolina, a Negro minister, and a Negro physician. From these interviews pupils learned that the Negroes were vitally concerned about their welfare and progress and were trying to find solutions to their problems.

The pupils studied the lives and work of Negro men and women who have attained distinction and made outstanding contributions to civilization. Among these were Booker T. Washington, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Doctor Carver, Roland Hayes, Marion Anderson, Phillis Wheatly, Maudelle Brown Bonsfield, and others. Among distinguished Negroes discussed was the famous Uncle Jagers, of Columbia, whose unselfish aid to the underprivileged of his

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race in our city is familiar to all our older citizens who knew and loved him.

Thus pupils learned that leading Negroes have devoted their talents to the improvement of the Negro race and have strengthened the bonds between the races. By the efforts of some of these, the whites have come to appreciate more fully their responsibility in aiding the Negro to rise above his present standards of living, and the Negroes have been shown greater possibilities of improving themselves. Pupils learned that Negroes have risen to great heights in literature, art, drama, music, commerce, the professions, and educational leadership.

Throughout the study pupils were engaged in such activities as seeking information from reference material, oral questioning, assimilating material acquired from various sources, writing reports and presenting them to the group. These activities aided pupils in writing, speaking, re-

search, and the organization of material.

The activities of the study enabled pupils to arrive at certain conclusions about needed improvements in the lives of Negroes, such as improved housing, increased medical service, greater thrift, higher regard for truth and honesty, assumption of personal responsibility, extended educational opportunity and recreational facilities.

Pupils offered sound suggestions for the encouragement and support the whites might lend to the Negro race. They indicated possession of a greater understanding of the problems faced by the Negroes, and a greater sympathy for them. They showed a keen interest in the Negro as a member of society, and a desire to see him rise to greater dependability and greater service. They learned to appreciate the fact that the higher the Negro rises in health, education, dependability and personal responsibility, the higher will the composite social order be elevated.

## Parable of Frills and Fads

By ROBERT LOCKE COOKE

A CERTAIN superintendent of schools upon a day (and this is a true story) met with the male parents of the children under his care in a convocation, yclept Dad's Club, to consider with them the charge which these parents and others had made, that the schools were verily squandering the taxpayer's money by offering entirely too many of the frills and fads of education, and

that forsooth a needed slogan was "back to the fundamentals".

"My good sirs," quoth the superintendent, "and ye will allow it, I shall act merely as your humble agent in this conference and will place upon this blackboard before which I stand, a complete representation of your expressed wishes in the matter, so that from your statements I can draw suggestions for reforming my evil ways. First, will you I pray suggest to me items to make up a list of desirable outcomes for your children which you hope they may achieve while engaged in the process of becoming educated in these our schools?"

Whereupon with great hemming and much hawing, did Dad Number One, a Rotarian, make his suggestion: "I want my

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *When the parents in this fable revolted against the Superintendent's "fads and frills", he invited them to a meeting—and caught them in their own trap. Doctor Cooke is associate professor of education at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois.*

boy to learn how to get along with other people and not be a poor sport." Emboldened by this, Dad Two, who made faithful and daily use of the gymnasium privileges of his membership in the local Y.M.C.A., did utter: "I believe good health is an achievement and possession above price."

Then did Dad Three, a neighborhood merchant, chime in with: "Can't the schools teach my children simple rules and practices of the business world?" This was followed forthwith by Dad Four, who delighted in a workshop in his basement for the execution of his hobbies: "Let's teach them how to use their hands as well as their heads."

Time would fail me to tell of the offering from the Writer, the College Professor, the Mill Executive and all the rest of the group, who were not willing that the writing should cease till each and all had been at the jousting. And verily the blackboard did exhibit and show forth a most lengthy list of items expressing the desires of the gathered Dads. We will in mercy to the kind reader content ourselves with the first eight:

1. The ability to get on with one's fellows—fair play
2. A strong body—good health habits
3. Knowledge of the fundamentals of business usage
4. Cleverness in the use of hands
5. Social ease
6. Love of good literature
7. Appreciation of cultural heritage
8. Prevocational training

Thereupon the Superintendent, with a glint like unto Belial in his eye, did assestate: "Let us now therefore make unto ourselves a parallel list like to the first, which shall answer the question: "How may we—Or may we?—translate these desirable qualities into very reality by way of giving training in these our schools?"

And straightway up spoke Dad, the Rotarian, and answered and said, "It occurs to me that to help with the first item our schools should offer more opportunity for outdoor and indoor sports; because my boy finds little encouragement or opportunity

for practicing the art of either football or track in the apartment house which is our domicile."

"Very well", said Friend Superintendent, "We will put opposite Item Number One in our list, *Sports Program Under Competent Leadership.*"

"Don't forget," said Dad of the Y.M.C.A., "to provide my boy with instruction in hygiene and good old-fashioned physiology."

"So be it, it shall be placed opposite Item Two."

"I maintain then," declared Dad the Merchant, "that the schools ought to give my children a course in simple business practices along with their commercial arithmetic."

Then up rose Dad Four—But what need we say more? Each Dad did add his pet idea unto the list, until once again there appeared a column, this time equal in number of items to the first column and to the number of Dads present in the room. "Very well," quoth our hero, the Superintendent, "Now let us next look over the list most carefully and thoughtfully to see with what items we can most easily dispense; for surely in this list there must in all truth be some unnecessary material."

"Not mine", said Dad One; "Not mine", said Dad Two; "Not mine", said Dad Three, and ditto and the same for each male parent in the council chamber.

"But alack and alas, my good patrons, how now?" mournfully moaned our Superintendent, "wherewithal shall we save the taxpayer's money, seeing that you have in all good sooth proposed six more courses than the schools in all the abandon of their reckless extravagance are already providing? Yea and moreover if you will gather closely about me" (and verily it did seem that the aforesaid moan had taken to itself an edge like unto a Gillette razor) "I will whisper what is now for thine ears alone, and see that ye tell it not abroad: YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN TO INCLUDE THE THREE R'S!"

# SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

Edited by ORLIE M. CLEM

On September 21, the school children of Nutley, N.J., had a half holiday. During this half holiday, the parents went to school instead of their children. Dr. John Spargo, superintendent of schools, believes that in this manner parents can better understand pupils' and teachers' problems.

*Correction:* The Hotel Jefferson in St. Louis, Mo., will be headquarters for the annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, November 24-26, not the Hotel Statler, as stated in the September issue.

*Successful democratic* school administration is reported at New Rochelle, N.Y., under the superintendency of Dr. Herold C. Hunt. A council of 15 pupils, one from each school, meets informally with the superintendent at least once each month. The pupils present problems of their own choosing and have a voice in policy forming. Also, a teachers' council of seven members presents the teachers' points of view to the superintendent and to the board of education.

A unique addition to New York City's public-school system has just opened—the Bronx High School of Science (for boys). Only students with a special bent for physics or biology are selected. They will be trained to develop "a scientific way of thinking".

The projected High School of Needle Trades in New York City will occupy a full block. It will cost more than \$4,500,000. The building will be 11 stories high, and will have 11 elevators. It will contain 65 shops, 6 laboratories, 2 gymnasiums, a medical unit, 4 stores, a museum, a music room, 2 business practice rooms, and an auditorium in addition to the various class and administrative rooms.

*High-School Packets* containing posters, leaflets, and stickers for American Education

Week (November 6-12), can be ordered for 50 cents (send payment with order), from the National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

One third of all teachers in the state of Illinois are now in teachers' unions, reports Kermit Eby, Executive Secretary of the Chicago Teachers Union.

*The Rye, N.Y., High School* has a self-reliant club or group. The club is open to all members of the school, with no scholarship requirements. Admittance into the group depends upon a pupil's standing on such qualities as dependability, loyalty, courtesy, and promptness. All members of the group have complete freedom of the building and grounds of 27 acres, when not engaged in assigned activities of the school.

*Progressive education* in a recently established English private school brings real alarm to the *Essentialists*:

Don'ts are taboo, and repressions are allowed to burst to the surface in a glorious halo of mischief. Sliding down the banisters is freely permitted. It may avoid a complex. There are special water rooms where children may squirt hoses at each other, and throw water about just as they like. There are "mess rooms" with tile walls, filled with pots of sticky paint, where they can daub anything they lay hands on. In another room, there are trays of wet sand, boxes, model cars, houses, etc. They are encouraged here to make model worlds. Invariably, the world they build expresses the inner conflict, their revolt against society, their tendency to bad temper, etc.

Many workers in secondary education will lack time to read the various reports of the National Youth Commission. A competent summary of the material will be found in "Youth in the World of Today" (10¢) published by The Public Affairs Committee, 8 West 40th Street, New York City. The summary contains a short, useful bibliography.

(Continued on page 128)

## EDITORIAL

### Curriculum for Iguanas?

RECENTLY a prominent speaker took occasion to warn his hearers against new proposals for the content of education by reminding them that the new generation is always "born into an old world". There is in that phrase a subtle suggestion that the best sort of education is that which adjusts the individual to the thought and customs and attitudes of the past.

Did you, gentle reader, ever see an iguana? An iguana is one of the few extant non-progressives of the animal kingdom. He traces his ancestry so far back that he makes the passenger list of the Mayflower look modernistic in the extreme. His early ancestors apparently had something that the other prehistoric animals lacked; for while the latter were stumbling about, getting caught in bogs and leaving their bones to future museums, Great-Grandfather Iguana found ways of keeping the family going. He saw to it also that the ancient customs were adhered to; and now Iguana of 1938 is said by the biologists to represent quite faithfully the best traditions of the species—habits, appearance, temperament, and everything.

However keen may be his enjoyment of life itself, he must be disappointed to find

that he is not socially acceptable—that he is at his best in a menagerie, and that after all, he is just as deserving of a mount in the museum as the luckless beasts that got caught in the bog.

He does serve one excellent human purpose: he squats there as a milestone, reminding us that animal life once passed that way on its slow journey upward from the ooze and slime.

And that suggests that this is not an old world after all; at least the world is not all old. The materials are old, but life is young. The Sequoias and Redwoods in California are said to be four or five thousand years old. But they can't vote or make speeches or write editorials, so they don't count. The rest of us are mere neonates.

Our countless ancestors lived their short span, then lay down and crumbled away, returning to the "old world" the raw materials borrowed for the occasion. All life is young, even though a certain fraction of life is always facing a return to the ages.

Let not the ingenious synecdoche of the prominent speaker deceive the curriculum maker. Remember: the only part of the world which is really very old is the dead part.

H. H. R.

### A Bit of Canine Psychology

AND WHY dog psychology? Why not child psychology? For the sake of variety, perhaps, and of course in this particular case either might be applied. The following experiment was performed with a dog as subject, and it illustrates quite definitely the psychology back of our educational set-up.

Sometime ago I attended a certain teachers' convention, and I brought back with

me only one new thing—a red and yellow rubber Donald Duck that quacked when you punched him. I bought him for my dog, Chero.

Chero has been exposed to a number of psychological experiments, but I had not intended the Donald Duck one. Chero looked upon Donald with suspicion and would have nothing to do with him.

Whether it was the coloring or the smell of the rubber or the sound of the quack that Chero objected to I do not know. Being Scotch enough not to want to lose my five-cent purchase, I decided to "sell" Donald Duck to Chero for a plaything.

Since Donald had a very big mouth, this was very easy to do. Pieces of meat, and cheese, crackers, etc., were placed in Donald's mouth and Chero, regardless of his dislike for the duck, would go over to him to get whatever Donald offered. Pretty soon Donald represented an object which always had something for Chero. As soon as Chero accepted Donald as a plaything, no more bait was used, and the duck became one of Chero's most treasured possessions.

Our school situation is closely allied to this experiment. For certain reasons (often we do not know just which they are) some children do not like school. School to them

is just something unpleasant. To make it pleasant then, each subject should be attractively introduced so as to be made acceptable.

There seem to be two things wrong with education over the country. One group of educationalists advocates no bait at all; the other group, too much bait. What we really need is something that represents a compromise.

You wouldn't keep on baiting a fish you'd already caught, would you? And yet that is just what many educationalists believe in. In fact many go so far as to think that there should be nothing but bait. On the other hand, there should not be just hook. When the pendulum swings back from the bait side to the hook side, we'll have an ideal situation with just enough bait for the fish to nibble and get the hook too.

DAISY M. ROBERTS



## "High Cost" of Adequate Books and Supplies a Fallacy

Somehow or other, the average citizen gets the idea that one of the big expenses connected with schools is the high cost of books and supplies, writes Frank M. Rich in the *Journal of Education*. A fever of economy generally strikes first at this part of the equipment. If there are no suitable textbooks or work books in certain subjects, teachers can write the sentences, poems, music, problems, and the like, on the blackboard and pupils can copy them. This is a 50 to 90 per cent loss of efficiency in the teacher's time, worth \$2.00 an hour, and the class's time, worth even more, but the city has saved 5 or 10 dollars a year (or whatever a year's wear on a set of books would be).

A principal went into a new building where book money had been rather limited. He gave two standard tests in reading, and found the pupils about two years below the general average for each grade in speed and comprehension. By a fortunate circumstance he was able to get a large increase in book money. He equipped every grade with the missing books, including a variety of easy supplementary

reading. In two years under the same teachers and with the same time and methods the pupils had been brought up to standard in all grades. A few hundred books alone had rendered an educational service worth thousands of dollars in teachers' time and of inestimable value from the pupils' and parents' standpoint.

Contrary to popular opinion, the cost of books and materials even in the best equipped systems is one of the smallest items in the school budget, and the one item where the school patron is most certain to get his money's worth. Careful surveys show that over 25 per cent of the teachers, even in leading states, are "compulsion type" teachers, who do little, day after day, but drill pupils on the contents of textbooks. The only way to get new ideas into such classes is to get new books. But all types of teachers are also bound by their equipment. The better the teaching, the more research and construction are utilized. These call for reference books and materials in abundance in each school.—*School Management*.

## SCHOOL LAW REVIEW

# The Board Can Do No Wrong

By DANIEL R. HODGDON, Ph.D., J.D., LL.D.

Some courts, realizing the frailty of the human bipeds that compose many boards of education, looked askance at that ancient gibberish about sovereign powers and governmental bodies who could do no wrong, and the "no money to pay" theory for injuries to children because of negligence. They wanted something that had a little better logic in it.

In 1905 the versatile Ohio court promulgated the "ultra vires" argument to relieve school districts of liability. This ultra vires doctrine had the old common law rule "that boards were governmental bodies and could do no wrong," and the doctrine of "the lack of funds to pay" theory backed off the map.

To commit torts, says the court, was beyond the scope of the board's authority. The board was not authorized to commit torts nor was it authorized to commit a wrong, and when the board does, it does not act for the district. It acts "ultra vires," beyond the scope of its authority. Hence when that august body called the board of education meets in solemn conclave, just as long as they conduct themselves properly, they are acting for the school district, but when they make mistakes in said meeting, they are not acting for the school district—"Case of off again, on again Finigan."

The school district could not do a wrong. It was only those careless, stupid individuals who had been asked to represent the school district who had done wrong. A fortiori, presto chango, the school district could not possibly be liable.

*Board of Education of Cincinnati v. Volk (1905), 73 Ohio St. 469, 74 N.E. 646.*

Oregon said, "We, too, accept the ultra vires doctrine."

*Wiest v. School District No. 24 (1914), 68 Ore. 474, 137 Pac. 749, 49 L.R.A.N.S. 1026.*

This did not seem to be a highly favored doctrine. It led to mischief. If the board were not acting for the school district, then whom were they acting for? They must be personally responsible, as they did not represent the school district. Their negligence must be their own. But when it was sought to hold them personally, the individual responsibility disappears under the legal magician's wand.

Oh! No! They were not acting for the district, just representing the district, that is all. They could

not be liable personally, for they were using the best judgment they had and if they made a mistake, they were not liable for mistakes of judgment or negligence individually, while representing the district.

In other words, this veritable jumping jack, first, did not act for the district when they injured a child, and next, could not be held personally because they acted as a body while representing the district. One of those ridiculous legal merry-go-rounds. Now you have him, now you don't.

### *When a Lady Slips on Ice Be Sure Who Owns the Ice*

In Illinois a board of education let a school house be used for \$25 for a social for which an admission fee was charged. This was permitted by statute. A woman who had paid her admission fee as she entered the building slipped on the accumulated ice negligently left by the board on the defectively constructed steps of a sidewalk. The widely disjunctive position of the ice and the lady's os innominatum suddenly acquired an unpleasant relatively conjunctive aspect, much to her severe discomfort and very unflattering to her erstwhile dignity.

Even though she sustained a severe injury because of the negligence of the board of education, she could collect nothing. She should have known better than to slip on board of education ice anyway, especially where the ice had accumulated and made the place slippery and dangerous. If she had to slip, she should have selected a spot a few feet away in front of a wealthy neighbor's house, and he would have been obliged to pay dearly for his negligence.

In this case the Illinois court held that if the board was acting in a governmental capacity, it was not liable for its negligence, and if it was acting in a proprietary capacity by collecting a fee, its acts were ultra vires and there was no liability. Heads you lose! Tails you lose!

*Lincke v. Moline Board of Education (1927), 245 Ill. App. 459.*

In Oregon, where the governmental non-liability rule still obtains in spite of a statute, a girl was killed during recess while on the playground in charge of a teacher. A tank exploded because of the

negligence of those employed by the board of education to install it. The board was also charged with negligence for maintaining and operating such a tank without a proper safety device, but the court exonerated the school district from liability because of the governmental non-liability rule.

*Austin Administrator v. Union School District No. 2 of Clatsop Dist. et al (1929), 130 Ore. 461, 280 Pac. 664.*

Massachusetts, the home of Puritanical piety and justice, gives us a leading sample case on governmental non-liability in which there is a sense of grim New England humor.

In 1877 a child eight years old fell over a staircase on a winding stairway in a Boston Public School. The railing was low and badly in need of repair, and had been negligently left in a dangerous condition. This was admitted to be so.

The school was on the third floor of the building. A long time before the accident the school committee knew the building to be dangerous and unfit for the purpose of a public school. They had been notified by the teachers of the dangerous condition, and had promised to make the necessary repairs.

The court used up thirty-six pages of Volume 122 of Massachusetts Reports to show why the board and Boston could not be held for its outrageous negligence in seriously injuring and crippling a child eight years old.

Not one sentence of this long erudite legal opinion of fifteen thousand words, more or less, has an expression of regret or sympathy for the little child crucified on the governmental non-liability doctrine.

*Hill v. Boston (1877), 122 Mass. 344, 23 Am. Rep. 332.*

The first case in New Jersey which seems to have a direct bearing upon school districts and boards of education arose in 1926, one hundred and fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and was followed by two other cases, one in 1934 and another in 1936. The State of New Jersey was one of the last states to render a decision on school district governmental non-liability, and because of its proximity to New York State, it is important. Two school districts, side by side or a few miles apart, have opposite rules of law governing liability of school districts.

New Jersey follows the old governmental non-liability theory, citing the Massachusetts case of *Hill v. Boston* of 1877 as authority, and numerous cases where cities had been sued for negligence in New Jersey.

In the first case the New Jersey court held that the school board owed no duty to the public. If it neglects to perform a duty which results in an injury to an individual, the injured individual has no

private right of action. In this case the school board built a wall in the basement of a school to store some sixty tons or more of coal. The wall was not built strong enough to hold this amount of coal. It started to bulge. The board was notified of the danger and insufficiently or negligently attempted to prop the wall with studs. Finally the wall collapsed and injured a woman.

The court in calling attention to the fact that the board of education could be indicted for its wrong doings but could not be sued by the injured party, said: "The misfeasance for which an indictment would lie in cases of this class is fundamentally not so much the accident itself as the general negligence out of which grew this accident."

"So, in the case at bar, if the board negligently built a defective wall, liable to break and do injury, it was indictable for that, whether the wall broke or not, or whether some one was injured or not; whereas, the accident to plaintiff was only special injury arising out of the act of public negligence in building a bad wall whereby any member of the public might be injured."

*Johnson v. Board of Education of Wildwood (1926), 102 N.J.L. 606, 133 Atl. 301.*

A local board of education in New Jersey which operates a school bus to carry children to and from school is exercising a public duty and is therefore free from liability for negligence in operating the bus. In a case where the driver of such a bus was negligent and collided with an automobile, thus injuring a child, the jury found the board liable for damage but the case was reversed on appeal on the non-liability doctrine.

*McKnight v. Cassidy (1934), 113 N.J.L. 365; 174 Atl. 865.*

In 1936 New Jersey handed down a decision with a kick in it. The board of education of North Brunswick ordered one Louis Pulda to deliver fire wood to a two-room school house in charge of two teachers. Pulda sent the wood by an employee in a wagon drawn by a team of horses.

A boy, ten years of age, at recess time was standing near one of the horses. The horse kicked him in the stomach and later the boy died. Action was brought against Pulda, the board of education, and the teachers.

A voluntary non-suit as to the teachers was submitted to.

The court held it was not negligence for the horses to be driven on the playgrounds so as to reach the wood bin, as had been the usual custom.

The court went on to adopt the old governmental non-liability rule. To heat the school building was a governmental function of the board of education. As an agency of the state, it cannot be called upon to respond to damages in cases of this kind.

# BOOK REVIEWS

PHILIP W. L. COX, *Review Editor*

*Coöperative Supervision in the Public Schools*, by ALONZO F. MYERS, LOUISE M. KIFER, RUTH C. MERRY, and FRANCES FOLEY. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1938. 340 pages, \$2.50.

This book is the first to appear of a considerable number which the reviewer prophesies will come from the presses during the next five years. These books will all emphasize the new orientation that the title of this one stresses. The current yearbook of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction of the N.E.A., which appeared in July, 1938, and the preliminary pamphlet that preceded it in November, 1937, carry similar messages.

These books are long overdue. While texts and college courses in supervision have so generally dealt with technics and have almost universally fed the attention of students and readers on the activities of the administrative supervisor, practice in all liberal and progressive schools have advanced away out in front of the "authorities" on supervision.

The advice and examples of Pestalozzi, Dewey, William McAndrew, A. E. Winship, "Pa" Baldwin,

and Kilpatrick have been of value in promoting the reforms, to be sure. Chiefly, however, the changes have been empirical; they have come about by trial and success.

Schools wherein teachers adventured with security and honor, regardless of immediate dramatic "successes", schools wherein they counseled together and educated their supervisors, and schools wherein supervisors were intelligent enough to know that important questions have no final answers—in these schools the great efficiencies of democratic coördination of released energies were apparent in the dynamic quality of the educative process. Thus there has come about in the practices of many schools, forms of coöperative reflection, planning and action which have harmonized with the requirements of the profession of education in a democracy.

Doctor Myers and his associates have presented this new orientation in stimulating fashion. Unit I presents a frame of reference; Unit II discusses the relationship between teacher qualifications and supervision; Unit III explains the induction and desirable guidance of beginning teachers; Unit IV

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emphasizes the coöperative character of professional improvement of teachers in service, and Unit V applies the philosophy of the author to the role of the supervisor as expert consultant of pupils, teachers, and principals in connection with three special subjects—music, art, and physical education.

*Status of the Junior High School in California; A Study*, by CHARLES L. JACOBS. Santa Barbara, California: State College, 1938. 55 pages.

Just what is the junior high school today? This question is asked over and over again. The new and adventurous school that developed from 1910 to 1920 became established in many state, city, and country school systems during the post-War years.

Since that time it has been both the beneficiary and the variable of school systems. It has been expanded here and contracted there. It has occasionally been gloriously housed, only to be transmogrified into a conventional senior high school because of registration pressures.

Some years ago Frederick reported in *THE CLEARING HOUSE* the developments and changes of junior high schools in New York State. The study of Jacobs here noted reports an elaborate survey of practices in California. He presents his findings under the following headings: Pupil-teacher Population; Situation with Respect to Certain Housing Features; Some

Phases of School Management; and Aspects of Classroom Teaching. The qualities of services and functionings are not so high as to justify complacency.

The author's concluding sentences are worth quoting:

"In the light of the facts here presented it cannot be denied that textbook writers do much rationalization, and that administrators appear to be more influenced by past practice, and by what appears to be financial expediency, than by advanced theory.

"Perhaps this study will help to throw necessary light on the marked divergence between educational theory and current practice as these relate to junior-high-school education. And possibly the findings here presented may help to stimulate serious effort to bring junior-high-school practice more in line with modern educational theory. Certainly if what has been shown here will help to bring this about, however slightly, the great amount of labor involved in producing this small pamphlet will not have been in vain."

*Youth Tell Their Story*, by HOWARD M. BELL. Washington: American Council of Education, 1938. 273 pages, \$1.50, paper bound.

This report of a study of the conditions and attitudes of young people in Maryland between the ages of 16 and 24, conducted for the American Youth

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Commission, is perhaps the most authoritative and important presentation of facts about the status and problems of youths that exists. These facts are quite disconcerting to somewhat fatuous adults (of which the reviewer is one) who have hoped that youths might leaven the lump of the stodgy world. They should be comforting to complacent or fearful adults who have hoped that youths would accept the world as they found it and adjust themselves unquestioningly to it.

The findings have been so adequately publicized in magazines, news stories and pamphlets that they need not be summarized here. Suffice it to say that aside from the 34 per cent who were house-keeping or voluntarily idle there were 19.5 per cent vainly seeking work, 6.1 per cent only partially employed, and 40.3 per cent employed full time. But 43 per cent of those employed felt that they were in "dead-end" jobs. Nevertheless, despite a vague discontent, there was very little questioning of the social order that doomed so many of them to futility.

On the other hand, it would be unfair to assert that they had formulated no opinions or provisions for immediate social betterment. A majority of them favored federal intervention to regulate hours of work and wages, to assure relief for the unemployed at a "health and decency" level, and to regulate child labor. Although a majority were opposed to war, only one in six asserted that he would refuse to go if war were declared.

No teacher in secondary school or college should fail to read this report. These youths represent a cross-section of those of the entire country. They and their successors present the primary challenges to educators. We must not be uninformed regarding our jobs when authoritative information is so readily available.

*Improving Instruction: Supervision by Principals of Secondary Schools*, by THOMAS H. BRIGGS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. 587 pages.

Whenever Doctor Briggs contributes a book to the professional literature of secondary education, the resources of our philosophy and practices are significantly enriched. The title of his new book quite properly defines in a somewhat restricted manner the scope and purposes of supervision as he conceives the process. Nevertheless, the spirit and processes that he recommends to the supervisor for the improvement of instruction should be readily transferred to other aspects of the education of school youth that are quite as important as classroom instruction.

Certainly the improvement of instruction remains one major supervisory responsibility of the principal. A careful reading of this book should help super-

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visory officers to refer practices and proposals for practices to clearly stated principles both of educational policy and of human engineering. He will be greatly assisted in making such references to principles if he will consider very carefully the many stimulating challenges that follow the chapters.

Of the first ten chapters, eight deal with the meanings and the organization of supervision, and two with the school principal's responsibilities and relationships. The remaining nine chapters emphasize the processes of supervision for improving instruction: purposes for teachers and for pupils; classroom observations; supervisory conferences; teachers' meetings; other means of supervision; measurement; experimentation; evaluation. It is a book to be read and pondered and constantly referred to by every person who would give constructive leadership to his school and to his profession.

**Forums for Young People**, by J. W. STUDEBAKER, P. H. SHEATS, and C. S. WILLIAMS. Washington, D.C.: Office of Education. Bulletin 1937, No. 25. 113 pages, 15 cents. (Order from Superintendent of Documents)

This publication has been prepared to help persons interested in promoting forums which engage the interests of young people. After delimiting the problem and discussing the desirable conditions for

forums in the first chapter, the authors present in Chapters II-IV, concrete procedures and administrative conditions that have proved themselves successful in high schools, in colleges and universities, and on community-wide bases. Vitalized commencements are explained in Chapter V; "Guide Posts to Organization" is the title of the closing chapter. This pamphlet should receive wide-spread welcome and use.

**The Teacher of the Social Studies**, by WILLIAM C. BAGLEY and THOMAS ALEXANDER. (Part 14: Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, American Historical Association) New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1937.

Professor Bagley has laid down a program for teacher education in the United States which should go far in improving the preparation of social-studies teachers. It is recommended that every prospective social-studies teacher should have: (1) Five years of pre-service education, (2) special preparation in geography, economics, sociology, and political science, (3) special preparation in another broad field, (4) courses on the collegiate level which "will cross-section the remaining fields of culture", involving reading of books "addressed to well-educated readers rather than to the special student", (5) adequate social life and out-of-class activities, including



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Professor Alexander has interestingly described the programs of teacher-education for the social studies in Germany, France, Sweden, and England. He is impressed by the stability of the profession in Europe, the superiority of their scholarship, and their high standards of selection. The freedom from formal course requirements granted to social-studies teachers in Germany, the emphasis on the study of literature for the teachers of history in England, and the use of travel as a preparation for teaching in Sweden and Germany are especially noteworthy.

HELEN HALTER

*Jones' English Pronouncing Dictionary*, 4th edition, revised. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1937. 495 pages, \$2.

While it is advantageous to have a larger edition of this "Bible" of phoneticians, it is a little disconcerting to find that the long awaited revision uses symbols which are no longer used by the International Phonetic Association. Those of us who have been waiting avidly for a new Jones can not help being disappointed by the inclusion of

the old symbols, which still make it necessary to have a key to a key. DOROTHY I. MULGRAVE

*The Instructional Program: Its Organization and Administration*, by F. A. FORD. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1938. 458 pages, \$2.75.

To magnify the child, his experiences, and the favorable social outcomes of these experiences—to this end the author of this attractive and comprehensive volume attempts to bring together in a unified whole the latest and best theories and practices of philosophers, psychologists, administrators, and specialists in classroom procedures. Such a task is not a modest one. It challenges the talents and efforts of a scholar and an educator.

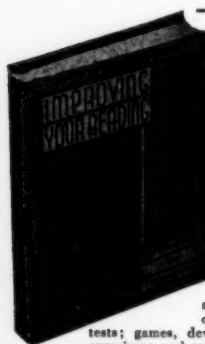
Doctor Ford devotes chapters to aims, learning, and supervision on institutional, local, and statewide bases. Six chapters are devoted to integrated projects, "campaigns" in spelling, reading, arithmetic, language, and guidance. The last two chapters deal with the social studies and the coordination of community agencies, respectively. The comprehensive treatment of this wide area of educational activities and problems proves that Ford lives up to the demands that his task has put upon him.

*Education and the Quest for a Middle Way*, by PAUL H. SHEATS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. 190 pages, \$1.25.

This book is essentially the dissertation presented by the author for his doctorate at Yale University. Unlike so many theses, however, this thesis is immediately recognized to be far too valuable to be filed away on library shelves of scholarly research.

It is a "must" book for all who seek enlightenment and orientation in our confused world of institutions, inertias, prejudices, and ideologies. It is not an altogether easy book to read, partly because it is so packed full and crammed down with important statements, both those of the author and those of protagonists for one course of action or institution, or another.

In Chapter I, Sheats states his problem and assumption, and sets forth the plan of his survey. In Chapter II he delimits the issues arising in five typical explicit areas: the equalization of educational opportunity; the relationship of school and



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*The New Better Speech*, by ANDREW T. WEAVER, GLADYS L. BORCHERS, and CHARLES H. WOLBERT. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937. 548 pages, \$1.60.

This volume represents far more than a revision of the earlier one known as "Better Speech", by Andrew T. Weaver and the late Charles H. Wolbert.

The book opens with a chapter on conversation which should be convincing even to the most disinterested type of student. It develops very clearly and concisely the social and professional aspects of adequate private, rather than public, speech. Subsequent chapters deal with story telling.

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The final section, Part III, has to do with such aspects of formal speech as public speaking, debating, parliamentary procedure, oral reading, play production, and radio speaking.

The authors have made many excellent suggestions as to activities for all kinds of oral principles, and their section on interpretive reading includes material very well adapted for all types of students.

DOROTHY I. MULGRAVE

*Choosing Our Way: A Study of America's Forums*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, 1938. 118 pages, 35 cents.

That the people of a democracy are assumed to be hungry for facts, opinions, and goals, and that such hunger can be satisfied if attitudes of objectivity and tolerance are maintained, present to the sceptic of popular government and unregimented popular behavior, evidence of blind faith.

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THIS is the first manual to provide, for teachers in training and in service, specific directions for directing effectively the study activities of pupils and for instructing them in the basic study skills. It is based on the belief that the teacher's job is primarily to direct learning, rather than to hear recitations. The book is rich in practical suggestions for the supervision of study and in illustrations of typical problems of teaching study skills in classroom situations. The

opening section discusses the learning process in terms of accepted psychological principles. The second part relates the study problem directly to the pupil in the classroom. The final part deals with the study skills required by specific school subjects and out-of-school work, such as reading, using the library, making notes, writing themes and examinations, doing research work, etc. This is a book for which there is urgent need. \$2.75

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*Youth in the Toils*, by L. V. HARRISON and P. McN. GRANT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. 167 pages, \$1.50.

The Boys' Bureau, representing the leading non-sectarian family welfare agencies in New York City, has for the past seven years sought to understand and serve that fraction of the male juvenile population which finds itself frequently in trouble with law-enforcement agencies. The Delinquency Com-

mittee of the Boys' Bureau has sponsored the study by two experts, of the system now used to deal with the delinquent boy and with delinquency itself.

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*Directing Learning*, by R. W. FREDERICK, C. E. RAGSDALE, and RACHEL SALISBURY. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1938. 529 pages, \$2.75.

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areas of study and learning. "Study, not teaching," say they in the Preface, "is the focal point of the modern classroom. Among the possible products of the classroom the ability to continue to learn effectively throughout life is frankly regarded in this book as the most important."

Here, in two sentences, the emphases of this volume are clearly indicated. Too generally are pupils encouraged to study in order to learn lessons for recitations or examinations; such a process and purpose is stultifying and sterile. The authors look beyond these artificial and immediate applications of learning to those of life itself.

In Part I, "The Processes of Learning and Study", the philosophical and psychological platform of the authors is set forth. In Part II, "The School and the Direction of Study", the practical applications to the problems that educators face are dealt with interestingly, consistently, and very effectively. This book is a significant addition to contemporary pedagogical literature.

*Personal and Social Adjustment*, by W. L. UHL and F. F. POWERS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. 475 pages, \$1.40.

This book is a text in social science. It seeks to aid in the guidance of youths along the highways of social responsibility amid the new social forces and social duties that are his. The text consists of eighteen chapters, grouped in five units: Successful Living; Social Life in the Modern World; Types of Social Adjustment; and Development of Social Responsibility.

The contents of the chapters are not unusual, but the orientation of its appeal to youth is almost unique—he is invited to understand himself and his world in order that he may desire to carry out his social obligations, to serve his community.

*Selection of Teachers in Large City School Systems*, by JOHN COULBOURN. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938. 177 pages, \$1.25.

Much has been said and written regarding the desirable qualities for teachers. The complacency if not the thought of everyone who places his hopes for social progress on the teacher has sometimes been rudely shocked by the studies of cultural levels, native abilities, informational resources, and ideological emptiness of large fractions of the teaching profession.

Whether or not the procedures for recruiting and training of more competent teachers can succeed is determined in no small degree by the selection of teachers for certification and employment. So long

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as the criteria for eligibility and appointment and the administrative instrumentation for determining who shall teach are based upon purely formal qualities, departures from mechanical course taking and credit getting in teacher preparatory institutions are in vain.

In the dissertation here reviewed, Coulbourn surveys the administrative practices of teacher selection in the thirty-seven largest cities of this country. A careful analysis is made of each step involved in a program of teacher selection, followed by an evaluation in the light of definite criteria or basic principles, 19 in number. These are validated by competent authorities in general school administration and by various research studies carried on in special fields of teacher selection and school personnel.

If the reader believes that the criteria are important he will approve the conclusions. To the reviewer the criteria are conventional and empty.

✓ *Rediscovering the Adolescent: A Study of Personality Development in Adolescent Boys*, by HEDLEY S. DINOCK. New York: Association Press, 1937. 288 pages, \$2.75.

When this attractively printed, interestingly written, and effectively illustrated book first came to the reviewer's desk, he was somewhat disappointed to find that its content seemed so largely to be a re-

threshing of old straw. The reviews of this volume have in general been so enthusiastic that the editor has postponed the preparation of a review until he could reread the book, to confirm or modify his earlier judgment.

The author has studied 200 boys, twelve to fourteen years of age, for a period of two years, that is, until they were fourteen to sixteen years of age, thus following them from late prepubescence through the onset of adolescence. As earlier studies had shown, marked changes in physical growth took place in all individuals but not according to any time schedule.

In all other observed factors, such as play, emancipation from parents, morality, self-criticism, the social conditions are more significant than biological changes, and hence, changes are either gradual or sporadic. Readers who are familiar with modern educational literature will find here mere confirmation of the findings and beliefs of current psychologists, sociologists, and school administrators and teachers.

The chapters dealing with the adolescent's choice of friends and his search for social status are fresh and vigorous. These chapters should certainly promote the accomplishment of the purposes of the book—the understanding of the adolescent.

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## SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

(Continued from page 113)

The following is the statement of the proposed New York State Constitution concerning state aid to religious or denominational schools:

Neither the state nor any subdivision thereof shall use its property or credit or any public money, or authorize or permit either to be used, directly or indirectly, in aid or maintenance, other than for examination or inspection, of any school or institution of learning wholly or in part under the control or direction of any religious denomination, or in which any denominational tenet or doctrine is taught, but the legislature may provide for the transportation of children to and from any school or institution of learning.

Recent years have witnessed various ways of innovating high school commencements. At the last commencement exercises of Marshall, Minn., High School, a panel discussion was conducted by the students.

At the last commencement of Frost, Minn., High School, citizenship awards were presented to representative students, as well as scholarship awards to the valedictorian and salutatorian, and letters to students majoring in special activities.

A graduate study recently released by the University of Tennessee indicated that most "leisure time activities" of high-school girls are only "time-killing" amusements. The study recommends that schools make more adequate provisions for the cultivation of wholesome leisure-time pursuits.

Ninth-grade pupils in guidance courses in the Winona, Minn., Junior High School prepare booklets as part of their class work. These booklets contain accounts of vocations in which the pupils are interested, magazine article analyses, book reports, interviews with former pupils on the job, check-ups of jobs available in Winona, and the training necessary.

The National Broadcasting Company announces it will present again this year a series of "Great Plays", beginning in October and closing in May.

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